

BACEVICH BREAKS THE RULES ■ PROFESSOR RAND PAUL ■ SHARIA HYSTERIA

JANUARY 2011

The American Conservative



Ghost of GOP Past

How Republicans Got Scrooged

by W. James Antle III

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DARWIN'S BEATLES

"Stop Imagining" by Jordan Michael Smith (Dec. 2010) looks like just another "youthful firebrand sees the light and becomes conservative" piece. But a little over halfway through the article Smith tosses a grenade into the reader's mind when he reveals that John Lennon rejected the theory of evolution while making clear the fact that Lennon was completely ignorant of what that theory actually says. Of course, for as long as we've known them, we have expected that kind of hippy-dippy silliness from the Beatles, but it seems a rather strange endorsement of conservatism. Unless, of course, we're promoting a kind of clown conservatism. Are we?

DENNIS ANTHONY
Visalia, Calif.

Jordan Michael Smith responds:

Dennis Anthony is correct to point out that John Lennon did not have an in-depth understanding of the theory of evolution. But in this ignorance, he was no different from many in the conservative movement. This may not be the mature conservatism of the sort Anthony likes—or one that *TAC* is usually associated with, for that matter—but there is no denying the power anti-evolutionists have in the modern right wing.

WHERE CAN I BUY AN AK-47?

The mainstream media regularly inform us that Mexico's drug cartels are heavily armed with machine guns, true assault rifles capable of fully automatic fire, hand grenades, and rocket-propelled grenades. They also claim that most cartel hardware is acquired at gun shows and shops on this side of the border, courtesy of our lax gun laws, and smuggled into Mexico.

Ed Warner ("Bleeding Arizona," Dec. 2010) apparently buys these claims, even though nowhere in this country

can a person walk into a gun show or shop, plunk down his or her money, and legally walk out with any of these weapons. And why would the cartels, with their worldwide reach, bother to circumvent American gun laws to smuggle significant quantities of weapons across the border, when true assault rifles of the AK-47 variety are a dime a dozen on the international market, and others can be obtained from corrupt Mexican military and police forces and deserters from these services?

WILLIAM R. TONSO
Evansville, Ind.

Ed Warner responds:

The cartels are in the habit of operating illegally. Such would apply to their acquisition of weaponry in the United States. They don't just drop in at gun shows or shops. With the money at their disposal, courtesy of the American drug consumer, they can make all kinds of illicit arrangements. It's said they prefer American weapons. Only the best for them.

DON'T BLAME THE UNIONS

The anti-union diatribe of "The Next Bailout" (Front Lines, Dec. 2010) is nauseating. Somehow the author has come to the conclusion, evidently with little research, that state and local government budget problems have been caused by organized labor. The reasons so many state and local governments are in debt are reduced incomes and increased social-program costs caused by the recession and continuing high unemployment. These were precipitated largely by policies of grossly overpaid "rent-seeking gangs" in management in the private sector. Meanwhile, unions in this state have seen their members get their wages cut, benefits reduced, be laid-off, or furloughed.

MARTY SAFFELL
Lansing, Mich.

MILITARY-HIGHWAY COMPLEX

I agree wholeheartedly with William S. Lind's fine article "What's so conservative about federal highways?" (Aug. 2010).

President Eisenhower was propagandizing when he called the Interstate Highway System "national defense." The national-defense sacred cow is not to be attacked, and Ike better than anyone should have known what a joke that was. The German Autobahns were magnificent invasion routes, paved lanes carrying Allied trucks, tanks, and infantry into Germany while enemy POWs were sent walking back on the medians.

Willima S. Lind and the late Paul Weyrich are and were the only true conservatives. Anyone with a decent engineering education can tell you the most efficient way to move anything is with a flanged wheel on a steel rail. It takes economic sleight-of-hand to claim otherwise.
MARTIN K. VAN HORN
Towson, Md.

EMPLOYER OF LAST RESORT

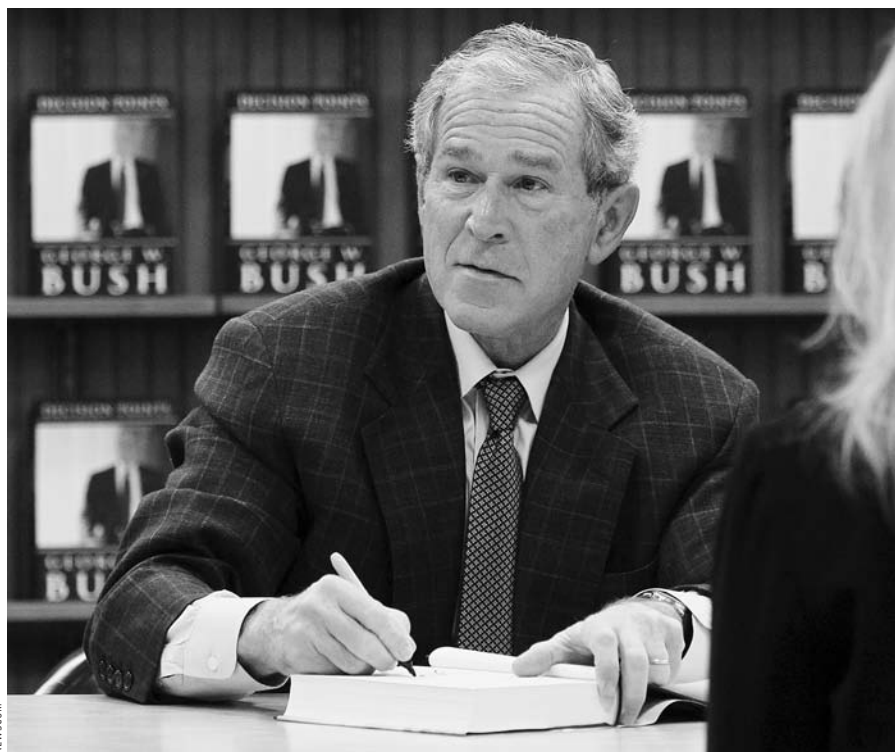
In response to Mr. Buchanan's "Bailouts for Bureaucrats" (Aug. 2010), the Reagan-era private sector invested in America and the American worker. Today's private sector focuses on outsourcing its operations to Asia and Latin America, thereby depriving the average citizen of the chance to earn a decent living. Why would anyone want to join the chorus of jobless? The public sector has always been a viable source of meaningful employment, and a stable society requires close to full employment for its citizenry.

NICK GATSOU LIS
via e-mail

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[ELECTION]

WAR FOR THE GOP

Voters may not have had foreign policy foremost on their minds Nov. 2, but the landslide that delivered control of the U.S. House of Representatives to Republicans has weighty implications for war and peace. Few of the new GOP legislators are anti-interventionists; many are outright hawks. But to the extent that they owe a debt to fiscal conservatives in the Tea Party movement, Republicans may feel compelled to put the Pentagon's pork on the chopping block.

John McCain and Lindsey Graham, leaders of the GOP's militarist wing, are already fearful. Analyzing Rand Paul's win in Kentucky, McCain commented, "I admire his victory, but ... already he has talked about withdrawals [and] cuts in defense." The Arizona senator is haunted by the ghost of America First: "I worry a lot about the rise of protectionism and isolationism in the Republican Party," he said.

A growing number of Republicans advocate—or at least contemplate—trimming defense and scaling back our overseas commitments. Paul's fellow senate freshmen Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) and Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) have chastised Congress for failing to rein in Pentagon spending. Senators Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), and Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) have also been outspoken. Deficit reduction "begins with the Department of Defense and goes all the way through," says Isakson. Coburn is even more direct: "We need to protect our nation, not the Pentagon's sacred cows."

This chorus is rising in the lower chamber as well. Newly elected Congressman Allen West (R-S.C.), who otherwise seems content with the War on Terror, nonetheless says American foreign policy has been too focused on "nation-building" and contends "nothing can be sacrosanct" when it comes to putting our fiscal house in order. Even some hawks are beginning to pare their plumage.



On the other hand, there are still Republicans like California Congressman Buck McKeon, who quickly reminded Tea Party types why they abandoned the GOP in 2006 and 2008. In line to become chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, McKeon insists, "we need more money in defense," even for programs that Defense Secretary Robert Gates has said are wasteful, such as a second engine for the F-35 fighter.

Senator Graham, meanwhile, seems to think the best way to renew Republicans' commitment to military spending is by getting the country into another war as speedily as possible. Four days after the election, Graham told the Halifax International Security Forum that the U.S. should not just "neutralize [Iran's] nuclear program" but "neuter that regime." Before he gets that war, though, there's the one he has to fight within his party. "The Republican Party is going to have two wings," he says. "The isolationist wing, and the wing led by McCain, Graham and [Jeff] Sessions that says you'd better stay involved in the world because if you do disengage, you'll regret it."

McKeon, McCain, Graham, and their cronies are old news—budget-busting militarists who dragged their party to defeat at the end of the Bush era. But now, unlike then, they have opposition. The fight for the future of the right is on.

[OPPOSITION]

LAMENT FOR THE LEFT

If the Republican caucus is more interesting after November's election, the Democratic side of the aisle is decidedly less so. The election was a rout not only for fiscally conservative Blue Dogs—whose ranks were reduced by half—but for an honorable breed of Midwestern populist liberal now on the verge of extinction.

Wisconsin Senator Russ Feingold, reviled by many on the Right for championing campaign-finance restrictions, was nonetheless a staunch civil libertarian and fierce critic of the liberal hawks in his own party. He opposed the Iraq War and Patriot Act from the start. Congressman Jim Oberstar, who for three and a half decades represented the corner of Minnesota stretching from the shores of Lake Superior to the Canadian wilderness, opposed abortion and gun control and, like Feingold, called attention to the downsides of free-trade agreements. Missouri, meanwhile, lost Ike Skelton, who with Oberstar was a holdover from a time when liberals were not reflexively pro-abortion.

These traditional Democrats could be reliable partners with conservatives on a range of issues. What is more, they earned their opponents' respect. Without them, the Democratic Party has lost much of its moral ballast.

[PRIVACY]

FLY THE FRISKY SKIES

Americans are in open revolt against the Transportation Security Administration's "porno-scanners." These devices, which use X-rays or millimeter waves to strip-search air travelers, are already in 68 airports, and the TSA hopes to deploy more than a thousand machines throughout the country over the next year. Officials assure flyers that images of their naked bodies are not stored anywhere—a claim falsified by the website Gizmodo, which obtained hundreds of the scans through the Freedom of Information Act.

Citizens who choose not to be pictured in the buff can submit to a pat down tantamount to sexual assault instead. California resident John Tyner became a latter-day folk hero in November when he declined that privilege too. "You touch my junk and I'm going to have you arrested," he told one TSA employee. Needless to say, Tyner was not allowed to board his flight, and for talking back to a federal official he was threatened with a \$10,000 fine. (TSA subsequently raised the threat to \$11,000—evidently they keep track of inflation—before backing down.)

The pretext for this latest invasion of Americans' privacy was supplied by "Underwear Bomber" Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who failed to bring down a flight to Detroit last Christmas. Perhaps X-ray specs or the loving touch of a TSA examiner would have caught him. But terrorists are nothing if not adaptable: if they can no longer fly with firearms, they'll bring box cutters. Take away their box cutters, and they fill their underpants with explosives. Peek under their clothes and ... well, let's just say drug smugglers are already pretty creative about how they get their goods through customs.

There is no end to the indignities that must be inflicted on the law-abiding if

every would-be terrorist is to be caught. There is, however, an alternative: clamp down on immigration and stop building bases in hostile countries. But we're told that would be intolerant—and not nearly as much fun for TSA employees.

[MEDIA]

THE OTHER FOX

"Radio is in the hands of such a lot of fools," sang Elvis Costello, and so it has been for conservatives. The biggest mouths on the right of the dial—Limbaugh, Hannity, Mark Levin—occasionally criticize wayward Republicans but always stay tuned in to militarism. Not all is lost, however: voices of independent conservatism, such as those of Sirius XM's Mike Church and Baltimore's Ron Smith, have been proliferating.

There may be hope for television too. While Fox News regurgitates RNC hype, sister channel Fox Business departs from the script. There you can now see Judge Andrew Napolitano's "Freedom Watch" five days a week. For libertarians, there's also John Stossel's Thursday night program, while Americans concerned about illegal immigration can enjoy Lou Dobbs's new show. This lineup is grudging acknowledgment from News Corp. that there's a market on the Right for views other than those approved by William Kristol or Jonah Goldberg.

In the 1990s, Pat Buchanan's presidential campaigns energized grassroots conservatives as the efforts of George H.W. Bush and Bob Dole never could. In 2008, Ron Paul proved that the ideas of the Old Right continue to have a following—modest but devoted—among voters. Winning an audience takes time, and the interventionist, spendthrift Right has entrenched itself deeply, but slowly an authentic conservatism of peace and liberty is carving a space for itself in the mass media too. ■

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Bush Is Back

As the GOP reclaims power, the ex-president returns to remind voters of Republican wars, bailouts, and boondoggles.

By W. James Antle III

EARLY IN GEORGE W. BUSH'S second term, a conservative band called the Right Brothers came out with a rocking affirmation of the president's record. Entitled "Bush Was Right," the lyrics also served to remind us who was wrong—Ted Kennedy, Cindy Sheehan, France. Reminiscent of Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire" but without the irony, the Right Brothers regaled listeners with vignettes of Bush-era glory: "Democracy is on the way, hitting like a tidal wave" and "Economy is on the rise, kicking into overdrive."

Within a year, the song would sound like a liberal parody. Bush went from being a unifying figure in the aftermath of 9/11 to a deeply polarizing red-state folk hero by 2004 to a unifying figure once again by 2007—this time, with the country unified against him. With his approval ratings in the basement, by the time he left office many congressional Republicans (at least the ones who survived the 2006 and 2008 elections) would privately admit they weren't sorry to see him go.

Now George W. Bush is back. He is promoting his recently released memoir, *Decision Points*. Over considerable protest, his presidential library is breaking ground on the campus of Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Both projects seek to create a world in which the lyrics of "Bush Was Right" would be seen as a fact-based documentary rather than an amusing bit of campaign-year overzealousness.

In this telling, the war in Iraq was not a fiasco but rather the centerpiece of a global "freedom agenda." That agenda was also advanced by every Bush initiative, from increased spending to alleviate AIDS in Africa to cuts in the capital-gains tax. The former president regrets the "Mission Accomplished" banner and telling Brownie he did a heckuva job, but he entertains no second thoughts about waterboarding or Guantanamo Bay. Bush sums up his decision about the former in just two words: "Damn right."

When the Bush library officially opens in 2013, it will probably feature a pair of cowboy boots with the famous GWB monogram. There will be some gifts to Bush from world leaders. And most prominently, the library will display Saddam Hussein's pistol, a 9mm Glock 18C confiscated from the Iraqi dictator when he was finally captured by American troops in 2004.

It seems the 43rd president has emerged from quiet retirement to lead his acolytes in one more rousing chorus from the Right Brothers. But for his party, this little reunion tour could not have come at a worse time. The Republicans have just regained power, taking back the House of Representatives and winning a majority of the nation's governorships, in large part by promising to have learned from the mistakes of the Bush years. Seeing him in the flesh once again makes us ask, as he might, "Is our Republicans learning?"

How Republicans see the Bush legacy remains highly relevant for their political future. The Tea Party is an explicitly anti-Obama movement, rising up during his presidency and in reaction to his policies. But it is at least an implicit repudiation of Bush as well. The mounting budget deficits, the loose monetary policies that led to the financial meltdown, and the \$700 billion Wall Street bailout they protest all began under Bush. The Tea Partiers also speak of constitutionalism and limited government, not "compassionate conservatism," "big-government conservatism," the "ownership society," or other principle-dodging gimmickry.

This implicit repudiation carries over to elected Republicans. After the GOP's comeback on Nov. 2, House Republican Whip Eric Cantor, who is in line to be the next majority leader, and Sen.-elect Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) each said the GOP was receiving a "second chance." Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.), a favorite among movement conservatives, frequently reminds audiences that he and his colleagues "lost our way." While these are more or less direct criticisms of the last GOP congressional majority, it is not difficult to determine who the leader was when Republicans lost their way or blew their first chance.

Nevertheless, there remain a lot of rank-and-file Republicans who sing along to Bush's tune. A billboard popped up in Wyoming, Minnesota depicting the former president under the question,

"Miss me yet?" A poll came out in October showing that 48 percent of the American people thought Bush did a better job as president than Barack Obama. Republicans no longer automatically dismiss the idea of a Jeb Bush presidential candidacy—though some of the longing for Jeb also reflects buyer's remorse with Dubya.

If the Right embraces an uncritical appraisal of Bush, the case against Obama quickly descends into partisan posturing. When it comes to bailouts, deficit spending, and expansions of the federal government, Bush and Obama exist on the same continuum. Obama may be further along that continuum, but in principle the two presidents' spendthrift approaches to fiscal policy cannot be separated.

Consider: by the end of the 1990s, Bill Clinton and the Republican-controlled Congress had brought the annual growth in federal expenditures down to less than 4 percent. Then Bush became president and Republicans lost control—first of spending and then of Congress. Federal expenditures began to rise by 6 to 7 percent annually. Under Obama and the Democratic Congress, the increases were on pace to reach 11 percent per annum. This is a difference of degree, not kind. "A \$220 billion increase isn't nothing, and the damage it will do is likely to be compounded by the fact that it represents an addition to the baseline," writes *National Review's* Stephen Spruiell. "But it isn't a gargantuan blowout compared to where we would be if the Bush-Reid-Pelosi trends had continued."

In his first term, well before the Democrats retook Congress, Bush presided over the biggest increase in non-defense discretionary spending in 30 years. His Medicare prescription-drug benefit was the largest new entitlement since the Great Society. Farm subsidies, sharply curtailed by the

Republican Congress in the '90s, were substantially increased. So was federal education spending. Bush also chose to finance the trillion-dollar wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through borrowing rather than by cutting domestic spending, a major contributor to the collapse of fiscal discipline.

This record damaged both the country's finances and the Republican Party's image of responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. It also tarnished the reputations of some of Congress's leading economic conservatives. Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), chairman-to-be of the House Budget Committee, has championed an ambitious set of entitlement reforms. But after the Bush era, he has to reconcile those proposals with a record of voting for the prescription-drug benefit and the "Troubled Asset Relief Program" bailout. Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Tex.), one of the strongest voices for budget control in Congress, also voted for the Medicare expansion, a fact that briefly endangered his bid for chairman of the House Republican Conference. Incoming House Speaker John Boehner, meanwhile, was instrumental in passing No Child Left Behind. Even Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) voted for TARP.

How Bush is perceived will have an even bigger impact on the Republican Party's foreign policy. Since the 43rd president left office, congressional Republicans have begun to question whether U.S. troops should still be in Afghanistan and whether they should have ever gone to Iraq in the first place. But there remains a large and vocal faction of the Capitol Hill GOP that would like a replay of Iraq in Iran: a preventive war to dislodge an unfriendly but not terribly powerful foreign regime and disarm it of weapons it may not possess. Only seven Republican members of Congress voted against the Iraq War in 2003, and today just two remain.

Preventive war is not merely a departure from the Old Right non-interventionism of Robert Taft or the cautious internationalism of Dwight Eisenhower. It requires a lower threshold for the use of military force than was embraced by Ronald Reagan or George H.W. Bush. Given an expansive enough definition of risk, preventive war imposes no principled limit on the resort to arms. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, it is understandable that many patriotic Americans were slow to grasp the inherent radicalism of the Bush Doctrine. After nearly ten years of reflection—and with the benefit of hindsight in Iraq—its reckless character should now be apparent.

Once the regime change is over, the connection between these wars and this country's national interest becomes still more remote. Much of our blood and treasure in Iraq was poured out not to keep Iraqis from killing Americans but to keep them from killing each other. Toppling the Afghan government that harbored the 9/11 masterminds was one thing. Spending the next decade propping up a different corrupt Afghan government is quite another.

Bush isn't the only one seeking to rebuild the GOP in his image. While the former president went back to his ranch for a time, many of his aides never left the political scene. Karl Rove is ubiquitous on television and was active in the 2010 campaign. Michael Gerson continues to drop his compassionate conservatism in the *Washington Post*. Peter Wehner is as hard at work trying to persuade conservatives of Bush's greatness now as when he was a White House speechwriter.

The new Congress would have a hard time escaping from Bush's shadow even without his former staffers keeping the memory alive. The ex-president will loom large in the first big legislative battle between the

Obama administration and the resurged Republicans: the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts. Here the GOP would be better off framing the debate as about avoiding Obama tax increases rather than extending the Bush tax cuts. In this political and economic climate, even Democrats are unlikely to let taxes go up on the middle class. And once the tax cuts have been retained for everyone else, the deficit-reduction argument for letting them expire for higher-income taxpayers loses a great deal of force. So the Bush-era tax cuts should survive. But if congressional Republicans are wise, Bush's name will disappear from their lips as completely as Richard Nixon's did after 1974.

At least Nixon didn't spend his retirement advising his party to have more Watergate scandals. In his rehabilitation tour, Bush is busily encouraging Republicans to travel once more down the path that led to their 2006-08 defeats. In an interview with Rush Limbaugh, the former president engaged in sophistry about illegal immigration. "I couldn't have said it more plainly: I was against amnesty," Bush told Rush. "I don't know many people who were for amnesty when it comes time for comprehensive reform."

"Comprehensive reform" itself consisted of legalizing at least 85 percent of the illegal immigrants already in the United States. And based on the country's experience with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, even more illegal immigrants would be likely to arrive in anticipation of this supposedly one-time status adjustment. If this was not an amnesty, it is difficult to imagine what would be.

Bush's biggest whoppers concern spending. *Decision Points* contains a graph purporting to show that the average spending-to-GDP ratio during his presidency was lower than under Clinton, Bush's father, or Reagan. Bush also

brandishes a deficit-to-GDP ratio that compares favorably to Bush père and Reagan. But in a bubble economy, these statistics obscure more than they illustrate. And the averages completely ignore the upward trajectory of both spending and the deficit for most of his presidency. Bush's first budget was \$2 trillion and his last was \$3.1 trillion. The \$127 billion surplus he inherited in 2001 was a more than \$1.4 trillion deficit by the time he left in 2009.

In an interview with Kim Strassel of the *Wall Street Journal*, Bush even denied creating a new entitlement in the form of Medicare Part D. "The entitlement already existed, and the entitlement was Medicare," he insisted. "And that's the threshold question—should we have Medicare? If the answer is no, my attitude is fine, go debate it. If the answer is yes, then let's modernize it."

But the expenditure of \$800 billion did not already exist, nor did the additional unfunded liabilities of Medicare Part D that amount to at least \$7.2 trillion.

This bizarre revisionist history is not the message Republicans want to be taking into the next election. Yes, Obama's liberalism breathed new life into grassroots conservative activism. But swing voters also gave the GOP a second chance because Obama merely continued Bush's borrowing, inflating, and war-making to no obvious benefit.

The Republicans lost because they were Bush's party. They cannot hold on to power the second time around by singing "Bush Was Right" again, no matter how catchy they may find the tune. ■

W. James Antle III is associate editor of the American Spectator.

Senator Tea Party

There's a word for Rand Paul's mix of constitutionalism and populism: conservatism.

By Jack Hunter

ON ELECTION NIGHT in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Rand Paul and his wife Kelley stood on the side of the stage where he would soon give his victory speech. They were beaming as they watched their sons onstage jamming their guitars to the chords of "TNT" by Australian rockers AC/DC. Rand had chosen the tune, a personal favorite, for his introduction. I was put in charge of helping the boys with their instruments—for the record, 14-year-old Duncan needed little help—and from where I was standing I had a direct view of Rand and his wife. I

don't know whether they were smiling more over pride in their sons or the fact that Rand had just been elected to the United States Senate.

I still don't know. As Rand stated time and again during the campaign, he had entered politics to do something about the enormous debt the government was heaping on his sons and future generations. This was not only Rand's basic message but that of the Tea Party as well, and the day after the election *New York* magazine wondered if Rand had become the "Tea Partier-in-Chief." Would he raise

hell in Washington, D.C., a populist hooligan unleashed in the halls of Congress? For the enthusiastic crowd gathered at the Bowling Green Convention Center that night, there was no question.

But meeting Rand, one does not think “hell-raiser” or “hooligan.” Cool and contemplative perhaps, maybe serious or studious. My first thought was that Rand had some of the same mannerisms and vocal inflections as his father—and like his dad, he would probably rather read about economics than hold meetings with the politicians who were screwing up the economy.

My second thought was that Rand was probably too smart for politics. That was what seemed to frighten the bipartisan establishment the most. Rand Paul becoming a U.S. Senator was simply not supposed to happen. On the night Rand won his primary, former Bush speechwriter David Frum lamented, “Rand Paul’s victory in the Kentucky Republican primary is obviously a depressing event for those who support strong national defense and rational conservative politics. How is it that the GOP has lost its antibodies against a candidate like Rand Paul?”

Frum was not alone in his concern. When Paul first announced his candidacy he couldn’t get invited to any GOP forums, and he registered barely 15 percent in the polls. A year later, he was tracking well ahead of his primary opponent, Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson, and had drawn the ire of state and national political insiders. The constellation of power arrayed against him was impressive, including leaders of the state Republican Party, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, former Senator Rick Santorum, and, perhaps most emblematic of the establishment’s fears, former Vice President Dick Cheney.

At the time, Cheney had only injected

himself into two midterm primaries—first to endorse Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison in the Texas governor’s race, then to endorse Rand’s opponent. Cheney’s statement said, “I’m a lifelong conservative, and I can tell the real thing when I see it. I have looked at the records of both candidates in the race, and it is clear to me that Trey Grayson is right on

Just how decisively the tide had turned against Cheney’s worldview was demonstrated by the margin of Rand’s victories. The Tea Party swept him to a whopping 24-point win in the Republican primary and a healthy 12-point win in the general election.

But these successes did not come easily, and Paul wound up disappointing

NO MATTER HOW PERSONAL HIS CRITICS BECAME, RAND WOULD ALWAYS DISCUSS THE NEOCONSERVATIVES IN MEASURED TONES, TREATING THEM LIKE HAS-BEENS, FOSSILS WITHOUT A PLACE IN THE NEW TEA PARTY ENVIRONMENT.

the issues that matter—both on fiscal responsibility and on national security.”

Discussing Cheney en route to a Tea Party event in Paducah, Rand did not hesitate to voice his opinion about his Republican foes: “They are the true neocons, they are ‘conservative’ because they’re military hawks, but they are not conservative, because they are not fiscally conservative. Didn’t [Cheney] say ‘deficits don’t matter’?” No matter how personal his critics became, Rand would always discuss the neoconservatives in measured tones, treating them like has-beens, fossils without a place in the new Tea Party environment.

And he had a point. Where Frum and Cheney were most honest was not in questioning Rand’s conservative bona fides but in their concern that dissent might emerge among Republicans on the issue that had most defined the Bush presidency—national defense. Republican candidates were permitted to criticize Bush’s big-government record but never his foreign policy. But with the election of Obama and the ongoing recession, the habits that had taken hold under Bush were reversed—grassroots conservatives quickly became hard-line hawks against big government but less rigid on foreign policy.

some friends and foes alike. Much of this stemmed from inevitable comparisons between Rand and his libertarian firebrand father, with supporters wishing Rand would behave more like Ron and opponents fearing the same. But in a state where nearly 60 percent of voters were registered Democrats and where Ron Paul only received 7 percent of the vote in the 2008 Republican presidential primary, it was obvious that Rand would not be able to run a race like his father’s and win.

When speaking about his relationship with his father, Rand always gives the impression that each of them is his own man, yet they are so similar in their politics that the differences are barely worth mentioning. I felt dumb asking questions about it, as it became clearer that the individualist politics of both men were reflected in their personal relationship.

Although Rand’s primary campaign had been a war on the Republican establishment as much as on the Democrats, partisanship can sometimes be useful. After the primary, Senator McConnell made peace with the Paul camp, and one campaign staffer relates the story that McConnell told Rand he could cause as much trouble as he liked once he got to the Senate—but he’d better get

there. As minority leader, Kentucky's senior senator had a personal stake in seeing as many GOP Senate nominees as possible succeed.

Rand would occasionally talk to McConnell by phone on the campaign trail, always politely thanking the senator for his electoral advice, which would typically be followed. But that was where their alliance ended. Even so, many of Paul's libertarian and Tea Party supporters cringed at the very thought of their candidate receiving help from—or worse, making public appearances with—arguably the most establishment Republican of them all.

RAND SAID THE PATRIOT ACT WAS UNCONSTITUTIONAL, THE IRAQ WAR WAS WRONGLY WAGED, AND OUR FOREIGN POLICY WAS NO LONGER AFFORDABLE.

Rand took help wherever he could get it. Tactical advice certainly couldn't hurt, and as Rand would admit, he's simply not a natural campaigner. He does it well, and obviously successfully, but he is a thinker more than a strategist, not unlike his father. His demeanor is overtly rational and says much about who he is and how he campaigns: he starts conversations with the intention of having a civil discussion.

Throughout the campaign Rand would insist on having "adult conversations" about relevant issues, saying that Social Security and Medicare were insolvent, that we could no longer pretend that debt and deficits don't matter, and that government healthcare and cap and trade would turn out to be tragedies. Rand said the Patriot Act was unconstitutional, the Iraq War was wrongly waged, and our foreign policy was no longer affordable. He raised the question of whether we should still be in Afghanistan.

During televised debates with Jack Conway, his Democratic opponent, Rand would sometimes seem perplexed

that his opponent wasn't listening to his actual words. At one debate, Conway asked, "Are you talking down to me?" Rand's eyes got wide, and it looked as if he wanted to nod his head in the affirmative, but he never did. Yet he didn't say no either.

Analyzing the debate, MSNBC analyst Pat Buchanan said Paul "looked like a tutor, he's very professorial, he's giving instructions on a complex issue. ... Rand Paul looks like a very intelligent, thoughtful guy who's trying to get across a point to a pretty slow student." I asked Rand if he'd heard Buchanan's comments. He had and was pleased. His wife

would later tell a story about her first brush with national politics—a trip to North Carolina with her husband to support Buchanan for president.

Rand's professorial nature comes through at surprising times. When a major donor requested that Rand visit a few contacts in Washington, D.C.—including *Weekly Standard* editor William Kristol—some of his libertarian supporters shrieked that the candidate had crossed over to the dark side. In fact, as one campaign staffer told me, most of the conversation centered on Rand trying to explain to Kristol why the neo-conservative policy toward Israel was irrational. Kristol tolerated Rand for a bit but eventually left the candidate with an assistant. Rand then visited the Cato Institute and made a few other stops that day, never thinking his meeting with Kristol was particularly controversial until worried supporters said otherwise.

Similarly, after the Rachel Maddow controversy in which the MSNBC host drubbed him for his reservations about one provision of the 1964 Civil Rights

Act—she equated Rand's support for private-property rights with the reinstatement of Jim Crow laws—he intended to go on "Meet the Press" to explain his position in detail. He was only dissuaded from doing so by the insistence of his top adviser: his wife.

Despite his characteristically blunt logic, Rand has a knack for customizing sophisticated libertarian and conservative ideas for mainstream audiences accustomed to more conventional Republican rhetoric. His talent in this regard served him particularly well in foreign-policy discussions. At one campaign stop, a man asked the candidate about his views on Afghanistan, Yemen, and Somalia. Rand answered: "I think the most important thing we do with the federal government is our national defense, bar none, but then I think it's open to debate what is in our national defense. The problem with Afghanistan is that we've now been there ten years, and the question is, 'is ten years long enough?'"

This didn't seem controversial to the questioner, and Rand would strike much the same tone throughout the campaign. Where his father might denounce American empire, Rand asks whether the U.S. really needs hundreds of military bases around the globe. Where Ron might have called for immediate withdrawal from Afghanistan, Rand says that we need to have a national debate on the war and questions whether nation-building is truly conservative. Ron liked to comment on the immorality of U.S. foreign policy. Rand prefers to say we can't afford it.

Rand points out that Democrats always want to cut the military but never the welfare queen, and Republicans are always for reducing the welfare queen but never the military—yet to overcome the debt we would have to look at paring down everything. This was never a shocking message to Tea Party ears, however unsettling it might

have been for the big-government hawks who had long controlled the Republican Party's foreign policy.

This is a large part of what makes Rand unique not only among Republicans but even among Tea Party paladins. Many outsider candidates give voice to voter discontent with the status quo, but Rand does so while offering a deeper philosophy that ventures beyond mere populism: a substantive conservative politics. The continuing mixture of Rand's ideas and the Tea Party could produce a more comprehensively conservative grassroots movement, just as the Tea Party has already produced a more politically successful Paul. Achieving this cross-pollination will require addressing the contradictions within the Tea Party—particularly its willingness to tolerate big government under the Department of Defense banner.

The same hardheadedness that required his wife to intervene in canceling a television interview is a stubbornness the U.S. Senate will now have to deal with. Rand told me that he would like to be judged by how he votes, not how he campaigns. The time I spent with him on the trail revealed a candidate who much prefers to come up with serious policy solutions rather than issue slogans or press statements. The campaign also revealed a man who is most at home with his family, including his famous father, and who realizes that his family's long-marginalized philosophical brand might now have the potential to become a transformative force in the Republican Party, if not American politics. ■

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Restrictionist Revival

Congress takes a right turn on immigration policy.

By Michael Brendan Dougherty

Two years ago, Mayor Lou Barletta of Hazelton, Pennsylvania lost his hard-fought campaign against longtime Democratic Congressman Paul Kanjorski. It was a replay of their match-up in 2006, and Barletta had every reason to be discouraged. He had been at the center of a national debate on immigration after he passed ordinances aimed at punishing employers and landlords who did business with illegal aliens. Though even today the particulars are being sorted out in court, nearly half of the illegal population of Hazleton moved out. Barletta had won a national following, but he couldn't win a seat in Congress. Pundits used his defeat to declare the immigration issue lost to conservatives.

But that moralizing didn't take into account the numbers. Democrats outnumber Republicans 2-1 in Pennsylvania's 11th district. And while Obama carried that territory by 15 points, Kanjorski won by only 3. The incumbent Democrat required a Bill Clinton appearance on the eve of the election and \$7 million in campaign contributions to defeat Barletta.

"After 2006, I couldn't sit on the sidelines and do nothing," says Barletta, "I had a lot of encouragement from friends and my own family, and even from Washington that if I ran again, it would be different." And it was. On his third try, Barletta won by 9 points in 2010.

His ascent to Congress comes just as Democrats are discussing another "comprehensive immigration reform" bill as

part of a strategy for dividing Republicans. "This will separate the reasonable Republicans from the pack running for president," said one senior Obama aide to reporter Richard Wolfe just before the election. But the politics of immigration has moved drastically in the restrictionist direction since Bush tried and failed to pass his immigration reform. The ranks of conservatives have been redoubled in the legislature, and one-time Republican champions of amnesty have abandoned their former positions.

Conservatives who would like to see a secure border and an end to illegal immigration are supremely confident that they can stop an amnesty bill this time. "George Bush could barely split us as a Republican president," says Congressman Steve King (R-Iowa), who is in line to head the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration. "Enough conservative Republicans stuck together and blocked his comprehensive amnesty plan. Obama has zero-loyalty factor with House Republicans."

Roy Beck, executive director of NumbersUSA, is similarly optimistic: "[Senator] Jon Kyl didn't want to do amnesty, but he is a good party man, a loyalist, and he did President Bush's bidding. But it was very destructive to him." Today the Obama White House doesn't even have a plausible path to getting any kind of amnesty bill to the floor. "I don't care what Obama tries to do to the Republican caucus," says Beck. "There is no way for

him to go around these new Republican Judiciary chairmen.”

Barletta is expected to reinforce King on the immigration subcommittee. “I have a lot to offer from my perspective as a mayor who experiences the drain illegal immigration has on a small city, a small budget, and the quality of life.” And there are good reasons to suspect Barletta can hold his seat. He had to win Democratic votes in 2010. And he previously won his mayoralty with 90 percent of the vote in his city, even taking over the Democratic ballot line as a write-in candidate. Pennsylvania Republicans also won overwhelming victories in the statehouse and control the coming round of congressional redistricting. Barletta won’t face strong headwinds anytime soon.

Not only will the new Congress include more restrictionists like Barletta, the open-borders wing of the GOP is much more abashed than it was just four years ago. The failure of comprehensive reform during the Bush administration has chastened former Republican advocates of amnesty. John McCain faced an intense primary challenge from restrictionist J.D. Hayworth. Fearing the end of his career, McCain began running television ads promising to “complete the dangd fence.”

“McCain went from being the absolute leader on comprehensive amnesty to saying he wouldn’t vote for his own bill in 2008 to claiming he is as tough as J.D. Hayworth on illegal immigration,” chortles Beck. “People may think he’ll flip back, but he’s gone too far now and says we must secure the border first. He’s kicked the can down the road.” King notes with some delight, “I have personally called Hayworth to thank him for improving McCain on this issue.”

Beck estimates that the number of what he calls “true immigration reformers” in Congress multiplied in the 2010 election. “In the last congress 38 members were committed to all our top 12

immigration priorities. Thus far in 2011 we now see 73 members. ... We’ve doubled our number of hard-liners.” While blocking an Obama-led amnesty may be easy for these new firebrands, finding an agenda that can navigate the Democrat-controlled Senate and get a signature from Obama will be extremely difficult. These “true reformers” have no comprehensive answer of their own.

Beck suggests that the SAVE Act—“Secure America Through Verification and Enforcement”—is passable even with Democrats in the upper-chamber and White House. The legislation would increase the border patrol by 6,000 members and expand the number of immigration judges. It would also require all employers to use the E-Verify system developed by the Department of Homeland Security to confirm that employees are eligible to work in the United States. Job applicants would have eight days to straighten out mismatches in their paperwork or be forbidden to work. The bill had attracted 111 bipartisan co-signers in April of 2010.

But King is worried that there is not enough support. “The SAVE Act has lots of components and carries with it a lot of verbiage,” he says. “Generally, stand-alone pieces of legislation are easier to debate and easier for the American people to understand.” King thinks the New Illegal Deduction Elimination Act, HR 3580, has better prospects of passing. This legislation would remove the tax-deductibility of wages paid to illegal workers and bring the IRS into immigration enforcement. Employers could avoid extra scrutiny by signing up for E-Verify. “It would cause businesses to willingly clean up their payroll lists.”

There is a reason why employers are at the center of the immigration fight today. Barletta noticed that this year voters were less interested in illegals *per se* than in what unlawful immigration meant for the economy. “You couldn’t find anyone

in my district who didn’t already know how I feel about illegal immigration, and so it didn’t come up as much in this campaign,” he says. “Instead people wanted to know about jobs.” That’s no surprise: unemployment is over 10 percent in his district and near 9 percent nationwide.

Barletta and other restrictionists are now finding ways to connect unemployment with immigration. “I know from experience how and who illegal immigration hurts the most, and it hurts legal immigrants more than anyone. It hurts Americans looking for jobs when our federal government allows this underground workforce to continue.”

Steve Camarota of the Center for Immigration Studies has shown in the past year that native-born citizens are in direct competition with illegal workers in this weak economy. “Many jobs often thought to be overwhelmingly immigrant are, in fact, majority native-born,” he said during his September testimony before the House Judiciary Committee. “For example, 55 percent of maids and housekeepers are native-born, as are 58 percent of taxi drivers and chauffeurs, 63 percent of butchers and meat processors, 65 percent of construction laborers, and 75 percent of janitors. There are 93 occupations in which at least 20 percent of workers are immigrants.” Overall, 24 million citizens are in industries in which illegal workers are heavily present. The results are crashing wages and benefits for American workers without college degrees.

Barletta emphasizes that bringing law and order to the workplace will accomplish a reduction in illegal immigration. “I believe in attrition through enforcement,” he says. “We need to eliminate the magnet that brings so many people to this country: illegal jobs. We can do this by punishing businesses that knowingly hire them and securing our border.” Beck’s case for the SAVE Act is that if it were made entirely about get-

ting Americans back to work there is a good chance Obama would have to sign it, having already committed himself to electronic verification in some form.

There are other ways the new Republican House can pursue immigration control. Because all appropriations bills must originate in the House, restrictionists plan to put financial pressure on the mayors of “sanctuary cities” that refuse to comply with federal immigration

solution to unchecked immigration. “I don’t see a big comprehensive enforcement bill materializing soon,” he says, since the president “will come down on the side of amnesty.” But he adds that a new Republican Congress can “gather all the facts on enforcement and investigate the results. The administration tells us we are interdicting 25 percent of border-cross attempts. But they laugh at me when I say that at the border. We’re

“I haven’t wavered because I understand how this problem is affecting us,” says Barletta, “People come here for a better opportunity, but that dream can’t become real if we allow illegal immigration to continue.” By pursuing enforcement against employers and squeezing sanctuary cities, Barletta believes “we can begin to solve this problem without knocking on doors in the middle of the night and tearing people out of their homes. We enforce the law, and people will make their own arrangements.”

Restrictionists have reason to be confident about the long term. Get-tough initiatives have won victories in every state where they have been tried, proving that it was Bush’s policies, not border-talk, that sank Republicans in 2006 and 2008. And these initiatives are beginning to work. Mexican authorities have reported that nearly 24,000 of their citizens returned to Mexico from Arizona between June and September of 2010, after Arizonans passed SB 1070, the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act.

Conservatives have shown that they can stop amnesty even when the White House and major figures within the GOP advocate higher immigration. They are poised to brush aside an Obama amnesty with ease. After six years of frantically playing defense, restrictionists are putting themselves in a position to change the federal government’s unofficial policy of neglecting enforcement now and passing amnesty later. “When Americans voted for change they didn’t want to change America,” says Barletta. “They wanted to change Washington. We can start with immigration.” ■

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HARDLY ANYONE ON OUR SIDE MENTIONS ETHNICITY, WE TALK ABOUT LAW AND ORDER. IT’S THE PEOPLE FOR AMNESTY WHO ARE CONSTANTLY TRYING TO DIVIDE US ON RACE. THIS IS NOT AN ISSUE OF ETHNICITY OR NATIONAL ORIGIN.

laws. “I don’t think we should abolish all the funds into sanctuary cities right away,” says King, “but we can start the process of squeezing the funding down.” Barletta adds, “Mayors don’t have the option of deciding which federal laws they want to enforce. They raise their hands and swear to defend the constitution and the people. We can remind them of their responsibilities.”

House Republicans could also return to their playbook from five years ago, when they added enforcement and immigration-reduction amendments to nearly every bill that they could. Bush’s cherished free-trade deals in 2005 were passed with provisions to restrict the importation of foreign workers. Homeland Security grants were tied up with amendments to increase cooperation between local law enforcement and the federal government in deporting illegal aliens involved in other crimes. These smaller votes on amendments help to pin down unsteady allies of enforcement and put open-borders legislators on the record so they can be targeted by restrictionists in future primaries.

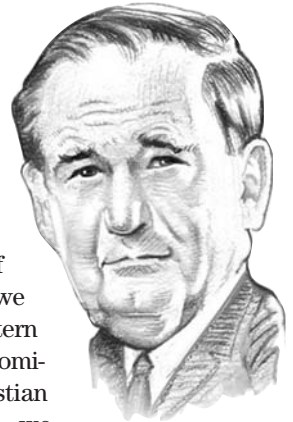
King wants to take the next two years to feel his way toward a more thorough

spending \$12 billion a year, nearly \$6 million a mile, and only getting 10 or 25 percent.” He characterizes current federal policy as “catch and return to the border.”

King’s goal would be to find a solution that can be made “like a business case.” For him, a fence along the southern border and stepped-up interior enforcement offer the best bang for the buck.

Restrictionists are also hoping to fine-tune their political rhetoric. Beck urges enforcement-first politicians and activists to police their ranks tightly. “Hardly anyone on our side mentions ethnicity, we talk about law and order. It’s the people for amnesty who are constantly trying to divide us on race. Nonetheless we have to emphasize that this is not an issue of ethnicity or national origin. People on our side would be just as offended if there were 11 million Canadians, Irish, or Polish illegal immigrants.” King says that “American exceptionalism can’t be preserved with an open border,” but adds that he wants to proceed “with a respect for mankind,” admitting, “I can do better on that.” In that struggle, Barletta is a key ally. “He’s been tested by fire,” says Beck.

Middle American Radicals



OTHER THAN BEING the highest-profile Republican victims of Tea Party candidates, what do Lisa Murkowski, Mike Castle, Charlie Crist, and Arlen Specter have in common?

Other than being Tea Party insurgents who routed establishment Republicans in high-profile primaries, what do Joe Miller, Marco Rubio, Christine O'Donnell, Pat Toomey, Sharron Angle in Nevada, Ken Buck in Colorado, and Mike Lee in Utah have in common?

The answer, writes Tim Carney of the *Washington Examiner*, is that all the former are pro-choice on abortion, all the latter pro-life. Tea Party types and pro-life conservatives seem to be twins separated at birth. Carney continues: "Almost without fail the strongest advocates of limited government in Congress are pro-life and vice versa. Think of DeMint and Coburn in the Senate and Ron Paul and Jeff Flake in the House. They top the scorecards of the National Taxpayers' Union and also have perfect scores from National Right to Life."

Carney's point: while all Tea Party insurgents and Tea Party-backed candidates seemed to agree on the economic issues—deficits, debt, taxes, Obamacare—they also seem united on other issues. Looking at the down-ballot battles in 2010, being pro-life is just one of them.

Three Iowa Supreme Court judges who ruled that the state constitution requires recognition of same-sex marriages were denied retention, and Gov. Terry Branstad campaigned for giving Iowans a referendum to decide if they wish to outlaw it. Tea Party types and Iowa conservatives were not only opposed to the idea of men marrying men, they detest the idea of judicial dictatorship.

In Arizona, Ward Connerly's anti-affirmative action initiative, which prohibits

race, gender, and ethnic preferences, won with 60 percent of the vote. Michigan, California, and Washington have already adopted the Connerly amendment.

Tea Partiers also united to back the Arizona law that requires cops to determine the immigration status of anyone whom, in a routine police encounter, they suspect of being an illegal alien. Passage of the law last April brought crazed comparisons with Nazi Germany. Opponents tended to go mute, however, when they learned that 70 percent of America stood with Arizona. GOP candidates for governor subsequently ran on pledges to adopt similar statutes.

In Oklahoma, a proposition to prohibit use of Sharia law in state courts passed with 70 percent. Sharia law is the basis of law in many Muslim countries, as the Bible was once the basis of much law in America.

What do these overlooked stories of Election Day 2010 teach?

Far more than the Beltway Right, the Tea Party is in tune with the heart of America—not only on taxes, spending, and Obamacare but on social, cultural, and moral issues. National Republicans may stay out of these bloody battles, but they hold great potential for bringing out voters and driving wedges through Obama's national base.

Consider. Establishment Republicans recoil from the issue of gay marriage. But in 2008, while McCain was winning 5 percent of the African-American vote in California, blacks in California, urged on by pastors and preachers, voted 70 percent to outlaw same-sex marriage. The pro-life position is also a far more popular cause among black and Hispanic Americans than is the Republican Party.

Oklahoma's prohibition against any use of Sharia should be seen as a cry from

the heart of America that we remain a Western nation, a predominantly Christian country, and we wish to be ruled by our Constitution and laws enacted pursuant to it.

The national outpouring of support for Arizona after that state came under attack for its law requiring suspected illegal aliens to show ID demonstrates how explosive the immigration-amnesty issue is. Republicans should not run from it, for our elites are further out of touch with the people on this issue than any other.

As for the Connerly amendment abolishing affirmative action, if the GOP wishes to win in 2012, the party will put this measure on every possible state ballot, especially in crucial states like Pennsylvania and Ohio.

What this panoply of issues testifies to is the true identity of the Tea Party. These folks are not single-issue voters, and they are not motivated by pocket-book issues alone. They have seen the America they grew up in virtually vanish.

Look at how far we have traveled.

We seem no longer able to balance our budgets, win our wars, or secure our borders. Compared to what our culture was, it is a running sewer today. Working-class wages and middle-class incomes have been stagnant for decades. Factories and jobs continue to hemorrhage to Asia. Company towns become ghost towns. Made in China has replaced Made in America. And as one drives through cities and suburbs, one encounters vast concentrations of people who speak some language other than our own.

The Tea Party people are rising up to take their country back, and that's why they're not going away. ■

Fear of a Muslim Planet

What's behind all this Sharia hysteria?

By Leon Hadar

WOULD YOU LIKE A SPOT of Islamophobia in your tea? It seems that a few of the Tea Party's representatives in the midterm elections concluded that voters would like their favorite drink brewed with very hot anti-Muslim spices.

"He is the only Muslim member of congress," Tea Party Nation leader Judson Phillips, a Tennessee attorney, wrote in an e-mail to supporters in which he urged them to help defeat Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) because of his Muslim faith. "The Quran in no uncertain terms says some wonderful things like, 'Kill the infidels,'" wrote Phillips. "I have a real problem with people who want to kill me just because I'm the infidel," he continued, expressing support for Ellison's opponent, Lynne Torgerson, an independent candidate.

"What do I know of Islam?" Torgerson wrote on her website. "Well, I know of 9/11. Nineteen (19) men from Saudi Arabia, all Muslim, hijacked planes and flew into the two (2) World Trade Towers murdering thousands of people, and tried to fly into our Pentagon. ... People say that we can't include the moderate, peace loving Muslims. Well, I agree. But, who are they? ... I cannot tell. It is not for me to go and try and find them. Rather, it is their duty to stand up and identify themselves, if there are any." Case closed.

Then there was Republican Senate candidate Sharron Angle, who told a crowd of supporters in Nevada that Americans must address a "militant terrorist situation" that had supposedly allowed Sharia, the Islamic religious law, to take hold in some American cities.

During a rally in the resort town of Mesquite, Angle was asked by a supporter about reports of an alleged Muslim plan to extend the Caliphate into North America. "I keep hearing about Muslims wanting to take over the United States ... on a TV program just last night, I saw that they are taking over a city in Michigan and the residents of the city, they want them out," he told Angle. "So, I want to hear your thoughts about that," he added.

Angle responded that "we're talking about a militant terrorist situation, which I believe it isn't a widespread thing, but it is enough that we need to address, and we have been addressing, it." Muslims, she suggested, have already imposed their religious law on areas of the country. "My thoughts are these, first of all, Dearborn, Michigan, and Frankford, Texas are on American soil, and under constitutional law. Not Sharia law," she explained. "It seems to me there is something fundamentally wrong with allowing a foreign system of law to even take hold in any municipality or government situation in our United States."

While Dearborn, Michigan, does have a thriving Muslim community, Frankford, Texas, which was annexed to Dallas in 1975, doesn't. According to Wikipedia, Frankford now consists only of a small church and cemetery. Dearborn mayor Jack O'Reilly, who criticized Angle for her comments, noted that there was no Sharia law in Dearborn and the issue was never raised by residents. "Muslims have been practicing their faith in our community for almost 90 years without incident or conflict," he

said. "To suggest that they have taken over ignores the fact that Dearborn hosts seven mosques and 60 Christian churches." Well, never mind.

But members of the Tea Party movement should mind. It is not clear that bashing Islam and Muslims offers electoral rewards to Republican candidates. Angle was defeated in Nevada, which, to be sure, had more to do with her offending Hispanics rather than Muslims. Ellison, an African-American who was born and raised Roman Catholic and converted to Islam later in life—and who isn't actually the only Muslim member of Congress—was elected for a second term to represent a district with very few black or Muslim residents.

And while Tea Party darling Kristi Noem, riding to victory as a Republican House candidate in South Dakota, accentuated during her campaign her opposition to building a Muslim community center two blocks from the World Trade Center site, it was her anti-Obama message and personal appeal to the mostly conservative voters in her district that brought about her success. At the same, Carl Paladino, a Tea Party favorite running for New York governor who messaged the "Ground Zero Mosque" issue to death as he ran against an unpopular Democrat in an economically distressed state, is not going to spend the next four years in Albany. Unlike Noem, the defeated Paladino was just a lousy candidate.

Historically, the Republican Party has been the beneficiary of the Muslim vote, reflecting the conservative cultural

values and business sense of a large number of American Muslims. Close to 80 percent of American Muslim voters backed George W. Bush in the 2000 presidential election. But by 2004—three years after 9/11 and against the backdrop of American-led wars in two Muslim countries—the Republican president had lost about half of his support among Muslims. Indeed, 85 percent of Muslim voters backed Barack Obama in 2010, the most solid voting bloc among any major religious group. With 79 percent of them voting for Obama, American Jews, reflecting their traditional support for Democratic candidates, ended up being proportionally the second largest pro-Obama group, a sign that while pursuing the aggressive neoconservative agenda in the Middle East has antagonized American Muslims, it has failed to win over Jewish voters.

Even in the aftermath of 9/11 and at the height of the War on Terror, President Bush and his aides refrained from defining their Middle East agenda as a clash between the West and Islam and initiated numerous public relations campaigns aimed at distinguishing between radical Islamists and the moderate majority of Muslims at home and abroad. But Obama's efforts to reach out to Muslims overseas by promoting diplomatic engagement with Iran and embracing a more balanced U.S. position on Israel/Palestine, coupled with controversies over Islam at home, have led some Republicans, including members of the Tea Party, to conclude that exploiting anti-Muslim sentiments could produce electoral gains.

While the notion that America has been gripped by Islamophobia is exaggerated, the controversy over the mosque near Ground Zero, the threat by a loony Florida pastor to burn the Koran publicly on 9/11, and online peddling of the absurd view that Obama is Muslim seemed to create a political environ-

ment on the eve of the midterms in which criticism of Obama for his domestic economic agenda could be integrated into a larger narrative in which the president—the son of a secular Kenyan Muslim and who had spent some of his childhood in Indonesia, the most populous Muslim country—was not only a big-government liberal but psychologically un-American, if not a closet Muslim plotting the fall of the United States and the West.

Hawks who believe that the U.S. has an obligation to spread democracy worldwide, including through the use of military power, have the right to be critical of Obama's policies abroad that, if anything, are based on the kind of realpolitik that guided the foreign policy of President George H.W. Bush. Similarly, there are legitimate reasons for conservatives to oppose a mosque blocks from Ground Zero, although a commitment to property rights and religious freedom is not among them. And the relationship between Islamic religious law and American law would probably require urgent attention if this country were being flooded by millions of Muslim immigrants. But according to no less an authority than the leading anti-Islam scaremonger, Daniel Pipes, the number of Muslim immigrants and their progeny in the U.S. is "somewhere above two million"—less than 1 percent of the country's population.

Nevertheless, Pipes has been warning that Muslim militants "want to change America and make it Islamic." Pipes, together with Robert Spencer, the head of JihadWatch.org, and Frank Gaffney of the war-mongering Center for Security Policy, has been warning for years that these Muslim radicals are attempting to assert the primacy of the Sharia over American law. These professional Muslim-baiters have been joined lately by more mainstream figures like Newt Gingrich, who has called for a federal ban on Sharia law, as well as by local

activists around the country who have been pressing for measures that would bar state judges from considering Sharia in formulating rulings.

But as Rachel Slajda, a researcher for Talking Points Memo, observes, much of this talk about the Sharia threat is based on papers written by members of radical Islamic groups around the world—such as the Muslim Brotherhood—that dream up implausible and often bizarre anti-American strategies. Political activists who perceive a threat from Islamic law also refer to a 2009 case in which a judge refused to grant a restraining order against a Moroccan immigrant who forced sex on his wife. The judge said the husband's belief that his wife must submit to sex was consistent with his religious practices. But according to the *Wall Street Journal*, an appeals court reversed the judge and granted the restraining order, citing a Supreme Court decision rejecting a Mormon's claim that his faith exempted him from an anti-bigamy statute.

It is true that a few American cities now have religious bodies that help adjudicate family-law disputes and other personal matters among believers through binding arbitration. But these are Jewish religious bodies and the believers are Orthodox Jews who adhere to the Halakha, the Jewish religious law. In any case, these verdicts have to be accepted by the disputants and are enforced by American courts that ensure that they won't violate U.S. laws.

In Britain, in the same way that rabbinical beth din courts can rule on civil cases among Orthodox Jews, Sharia courts were given power to adjudicate Muslim civil cases ranging from divorce and financial disputes to those involving domestic violence. Whether the U.S. would allow practicing Muslims the same rights as Orthodox Jews have to operate such courts could become an

issue if the number and influence of Muslims grows in this country.

But what exactly does this have to do with the threat that al-Qaeda and other Muslim terrorist groups pose to America? For those who suggest that Islam by definition is the breeding ground for contemporary terrorism, the notion that Muslims could become law-abiding American citizens or American patriots is a contradiction in terms. As *Reason's* Jesse Walker notes, this fear of Islam echoes the Know-Nothings' anti-Catholic sentiments and the fear of the Vatican. The main difference between then and now is that the Know-Nothings of the 19th century were not advocating sending American troops to depose the pope and invade Catholic countries to force them to embrace American values.

Muslim anti-Americanism and violence, on the other hand, is in large part a response to American attempts to establish domination over the Middle East. Interestingly enough, in his groundbreaking essay "The Clash of Civilizations," Samuel Huntington warned against the kind of policy that would inflame anti-Americanism in the Middle East and foment conflict between the U.S. and the Muslim world. The suggestion that Muslims are invading America and trying to force their values and law on us seems to be a form of projection bias—attributing our own impulses to the other side. We want to control Muslims in the Middle East, and we blame the Muslims for planning to control us here at home.

Nation-states certainly have the right to control their borders and implement a policy that takes into consideration the economic, socio-cultural, and national-security costs of immigration. That makes it necessary to have debates over the mostly Hispanic immigration to this country and the mostly Muslim immigration to European countries. But the main threat Americans face from Muslims is in the realm of national security and in the

form of terrorism. Taking steps to reduce U.S. military intervention in the broader Middle East and employing a mix of intelligence and security operations to prevent terrorism could prove very effective in lessening this threat. We certainly have no interest in closing the doors of this country to talented and industrious Muslim immigrants who would be ready to embrace American values and adhere to our laws.

Pursuing a foreign policy that presupposes a unified, homogeneous, and anti-American Muslim world runs very much contrary to U.S. strategic interests. We would be better off recognizing that this imaginary entity, the Caliphate, consists in reality of many conflicting nation-states, ethnic groups, and religious sects. Some of them want to work and trade with us, and some don't. But

sowing fear of a monolithic Islam serves the interests of our client states, defense contractors, and lobbyists who press for rising defense budgets and further military interventions. This anti-Islam narrative is also promoted by Republican activists and conservative-movement pundits who hope that like the Red Menace of old, the specter of a Green Peril could serve as a unifying force for the political right. But this kind of policy would only end up overextending the military, ballooning deficits, and devastating our economic base. That's exactly the kind of tea that conservatives and libertarians have sworn not to drink. ■

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Up in Smoke

California was on the verge of legalizing marijuana—until profit-hungry growers just said no.

By Kelley Beaucar Vlahos

THERE'S A SCENE in the Bogart-Bacall noir classic "Key Largo" wherein one of the gangsters at the hotel starts rolling at the mouth to distract skittish guests from the hurricane outside. "I bet you two or three years we get Prohibition back," he says almost wistfully. "This time we make it stick ... absolutely, yeah." Prohibition had been great for business. It made kings of men.

While it would be unfair to compare California marijuana growers and distributors—legal or otherwise—to Prohibition-era gangsters, the failure of Golden State voters on Nov. 2 to legalize

the possession and sale of marijuana was partly due to cultivators' opposition. Self-interest trumped what could have been the most significant step toward decriminalizing marijuana since the herb was outlawed by the federal government in 1937. Growers saw their piece of a lucrative market threatened, say critics, so they cast their ballots accordingly.

"They were willing to vote against this because they enjoy the succor from the market price caused by prohibition," said Allen St. Pierre, director of NORML (the National Organization for the

Reform of Marijuana Laws), after Proposition 19 went down to a 46-54 percent defeat. The initiative would have allowed individual Californians to maintain tiny plots for marijuana plants and possess small amounts of the drug, while local governments would be permitted to regulate and tax pot like any other commodity.

St. Pierre says “new wave” growers—particularly those in the “Emerald Triangle” (Northern California’s Humboldt, Mendocino, and Trinity Counties) who made big money from pot after medical marijuana was legalized by California voters in 1996—hired PR firms, led protests, and poured their profits into stopping Prop 19. More established growers, the off-the-grid hippies who had been illegally raising the crop for decades, joined in for fear of a new tax regime and the prospect of being squeezed out the market entirely. Overall, the Emerald Triangle voted down Prop 19 by an even greater margin than the rest of the state, 55 to 45 percent.

“This is how divided it is when you get down to brass tacks, when it comes down to the almighty dollar,” St. Pierre tells *The American Conservative*. “The amazing division of what can be called the ‘I gots mine’ crowd, and people like me”—that is, activists who have been promoting legalization and fighting the Drug War as a moral and constitutional issue for decades.

What St. Pierre calls the “succor” of the “almighty dollar” is far from one activist’s postmortem hyperbole. Some state estimates declare the annual crop of marijuana in California to be worth \$14 billion. In 2009, the *New York Times* reported that medical marijuana sales totaled \$2 billion the year before. Proponents of Prop 19 claimed taxes on legalized cannabis could bring upwards of \$1.4 billion into beleaguered state coffers, though that would

depend on how many local governments bought into the program.

Nationwide, marijuana is a vast black market economy, which is now being funneled into profitable legal channels in 14 states through their burgeoning medical-marijuana programs. According to *SmartMoney*, there are already a handful of tiny medical-marijuana-related companies trading on the open market, “the most promising” being Converted Organics, a \$2.6 million organic-fertilizer firm.

A cottage industry is sprouting up to accommodate the proliferation of state laws sanctioning private “grows” and individual access to medical marijuana, a cause which today is supported by no less than 70 percent of the public. (An all-time high of 46 percent of Americans now support full legalization.) Aside from suppliers dealing in farming technology and materials, there are the accountants, lawyers, insurance brokers, real estate agents, bookkeepers, and even franchise dealers and “colleges” that teach aspiring cannabis entrepreneurs how to cultivate and market marijuana.

“This is going to be the fifth largest business in America, and the leading positions are being staked out now,” Steve DeAngelo told *SmartMoney* in November. DeAngelo is executive director of Harborside Health Center, a licensed dispensary in Oakland that made \$21 million in sales last year and purchased marijuana from 500 area farms. He was also an opponent of Prop 19. He says he was worried about government overreach. Others say he was just protecting Harborside’s market share.

On the other hand, Richard Lee, the wildly successful medical-marijuana distributor and founder of Oaksterdam University—a premier institution for “higher” learning, boasting three campuses in California and \$2 million

annual revenue—saw only upsides to pursuing Prop. 19. He wrote and promoted the initiative, ignoring resistance from growers and the pro-legalization community and poured in \$1 million of his own money to collect the 434,000 petition signatures necessary to get it on November’s ballot.

Lee told CNN just before the election that marijuana is already a “legitimate business, legitimate industry like other ones. Just like the alcohol industry is a real business.” His aim was to legalize this commerce and end the new prohibition, which he said does nothing but promote Al Capone-style crime on the one hand and a prison system clogged with non-violent offenders on the other.

But critics like NORML say Lee’s campaign did not reach out to the Emerald Triangle, and while its denizens’ concerns were partly selfish, they were serious and not altogether unrealistic. Their fears should have been addressed, and could have been if there had been a more concerted effort to build consensus from the beginning.

“The fact is that many small time growers are paying their mortgage and feeding their families from profits on illegal marijuana. Nobody is going to vote to reduce the price of weed from \$300/oz to \$60/oz when that takes food out of their kids’ mouths. The next initiative needs to create a level playing field for small businesses to compete in marijuana cultivation,” wrote NORML’s outreach director, Russ Belville, in his own postmortem, “10 Lessons Learned from Marijuana Election Defeats,” for *Men’s News Daily*.

“By emphasizing small, local grows, we can increase the grower vote while also soothing pot smokers worried about ‘Walmartization’ and non-tokers worried about pot becoming as ubiquitous as [the] alcohol they see advertised daily nearly everywhere.”

Certainly, “Walmartization” is a real

concern: city-sanctioned “mega grow” farms for medical marijuana are already being planned in Oakland and Berkeley. Not only would such plantations drive all existing “mom and pop” operations to the margins, critics fear pot would go the way of shoes and children’s clothing, markets rendered thin and tasteless by the dominance of cheap Chinese imports over the last 20 years.

But St. Pierre says there is nothing one can do about the prices, which would plunge back to earth—estimates say by 80 percent—if legalization were passed and government had the opportunity to tax and regulate it. “Cannabis when it is grown in the ground is pennies on the pound,” says St. Pierre.

The government will likely slap marijuana with a 5 to 12 percent “vice tax,” but high-profit growers “with their SUVs” and their “aggressive” defense of the status quo could kiss their high-times goodbye, he adds. “The bottom line is you simply can’t continue growing vegetable matter and get \$300 to \$400 an ounce for it.”

As for the mom-and-pops and the illegal growers in the Emerald Triangle, he said there’s a case to be made that under legalization, organic farms that have been cultivating “the finest cannabis” for the last 40 years will have the opportunity to be the Whole Foods to Southern California’s Sam’s Club market—or better yet, the new Sonoma wine country. Instead of traveling hundreds of miles for the finest grape, yuppies will build entire vacations around the lush California countryside and award-winning strains of sensimilla.

This future sounds worlds more attractive than the carny-like atmosphere that took hold in places like Venice Beach after medical marijuana was legalized 14 years ago, giving local jurisdictions discretion over cultivation and distribution. Some did this better than others, and the results have tainted

In his new book *Decision Points*, ex-president George W. Bush confirms —“damn right,” he says—that he personally authorized the waterboarding of al-Qaeda prisoners. The revelation raises some interesting questions. Nearly everyone but Bush and his accommodating Justice Department lawyers John Yoo and Jay Bybee believes that the practice is indeed torture. The British government has denounced the procedure and expressed the view that it never produced any useful intelligence.

Washington itself once regarded waterboarding as a very serious crime. During the U.S.-Philippine War (1899-1902), five Army officers were convicted by courts-martial for using it in interrogating Filipino prisoners. Army boards considered but rejected the defense of “military necessity,” recognizing that the practice was torture. After World War II, German officers were imprisoned for waterboarding captured resistance fighters. Japanese military officers were executed for torture of prisoners that included waterboarding. So it would seem that there is a firmly established legal precedent accepted by the United States since before 1946 that the practice is torture. Now the Justice Department and Pentagon confront a dilemma about what to do about the American soldiers who were tried and punished for carrying out exactly the same procedure during the Vietnam War. Army Staff Sergeant David Carmon was disciplined after he was observed waterboarding a prisoner, and there may have been more such prosecutions. If President Barack Obama opts not to punish his predecessor for admitting to a war crime, then the soldiers who have been tried for the same offense surely should be given pardons whether or not they are still alive. Does Obama have the courage to take such a step? Almost certainly not, particularly as it would also be an implicit public endorsement of the practice of torture by his administration.



There are signs that Israel might be planning a military incursion into south Lebanon, encouraged by the U.S. midterm election results that suggest that Tel Aviv will receive a free pass from Congress and the administration if it goes after Hezbollah again. Hezbollah is believed to be particularly vulnerable because of highly disruptive internal arguments about what its role should be vis-à-vis the Lebanese government.

Intelligence sources note that the level of Israeli espionage directed against Lebanon has increased sharply over the past few months. In late October, a Lebanese military court convicted three men of spying for Israel and sentenced them to death. Other sources report that there have been literally dozens of arrests of Lebanese as part of a nationwide espionage investigation. Most have been charged with spying for Israel, though a few were apparently working for Damascus. One of the men convicted most recently provided sensitive information and admitted that he had repeatedly crossed the border into Israel for training, learning to use telecommunications devices and photographic equipment to assist his spying. Those arrested over the past year have included a high-ranking army officer, a member of the leading Christian party, and several telecommunications company employees, suggesting that Israel has sources throughout the Lebanese government and that it has also successfully tapped into the country’s phone and data systems.

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA Officer, is executive director of the Council for the National Interest.

feelings about the government's ability to handle legalization. That raises another reason critics say Prop 19 failed: it was too ambitious, creating too many details where the devil can hide. It turned out to be self-defeating.

"It was a very complicated initiative," says Eric Garris, who has actively supported marijuana reform efforts in California for the last 40 years, beginning with the first ballot initiative, another Prop 19, in 1972. That one would have made simple possession a misdemeanor carrying a \$100 fine. It lost, garnering only 34 percent of the vote.

Garris, a libertarian based in San Francisco and the founder and managing editor of *Antiwar.com*, insists the latest Prop 19 was upended not by hostile growers upstate but by provisions in the bill that would have made it difficult for employers to discriminate against pot smokers in the workplace. He said this killed a golden opportunity to get libertarians and conservatives on board, scared big business, and gave opponents more ammunition than Richard Lee and his group could handle.

"I think that if they left that out, it might have passed," says Garris. "Regardless of all the other problems, that was the most significant one. People don't want to think they will be forced to hire potheads." Indeed, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.), a stalwart conservative who has represented Huntington Beach for 22 years, told *TAC* in July that the Drug War has been a "tremendous cost" to America, morally and fiscally, and he would have gladly supported Prop 19 but for this one red flag.

It's not as though all conservatives see marijuana as the "evil weed." Sarah Palin has suggested police have better things to do than bust smokers in their own homes, and outgoing California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a law in July that reduces the

penalty for adults carrying small amounts of marijuana to the equivalent of a speeding ticket. But like Rohrabacher, he didn't like Prop 19. Appearing on "The Tonight Show" on Nov. 8, he said it was "badly written" and "went a little bit too far."

The California Chamber of Commerce, smelling blood, seemed to hit its mark with a \$250,000 radio campaign in October stressing the issue. "[Prop 19] creates a whole new protected class of employees and ties employers' hands in maintaining a drug and alcohol-free workplace," said Erika Frank, general counsel for the California Chamber of Commerce in Sacramento, in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal's* MarketWatch. "The concern is being able to manage marijuana use and employees showing up to work high on marijuana."

Garris says the initiative left too many unanswered questions and gave people on both sides plenty to worry about. How would competing jurisdictional laws across the state affect growers and smokers? What about current medical-marijuana card holders? How would police test for DWS—driving while stoned? Could the new law actually be more punitive? And, of course, what about the children?

"Because it was so complicated they needed time to sell it and they didn't have the time to sell it. As a result of not selling it, every single major newspaper came out against it, even the two San Francisco dailies," Garris tells *TAC*.

He says longtime activists had tried to dissuade Lee from pursuing legalization in 2010 because it "was premature," thinking they'd have a better chance to pass it in the 2012 presidential election cycle. Thus much of the organized grassroots didn't give 100 percent of their effort—or worse, they actively campaigned against the initiative. Without them driving younger Californians to the

polls, voters over 50 dominated the election. And they certainly weren't heading to the voting booth to legalize pot, particularly in Los Angeles County, which represents a quarter of the state's population and voted against legalization 53 to 47 percent.

Former New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson, a pro-legalization activist and libertarian Republican whom many expect to launch a presidential bid in 2012, tells *TAC* there was no excuse for not supporting the measure, actively or otherwise. "I'm in the camp that there should have been a yes vote. I'm absolutely aware of all of the flaws. But it slays me to think that the pro-marijuana community stuck their knife in it because it wasn't perfect."

"But I do think this advanced the issue nationwide," he adds, looking to the future. Conservatives, he says—including the Tea Partiers he addresses regularly—are starting to open up to legalization as a question of limited government and individual liberty. What's more, 46 percent of the California electorate is nothing to balk at. "I'm viewing the whole thing as positive."

Those missed votes in Los Angeles and the three counties that make up the Emerald Triangle made the difference, as did opposition from a pro-pot community wary of the initiative's darker implications. The key next time—when ever there is a next time—will be framing a cleaner, "up or down" proposal, building the necessary coalitions, and convincing the new-wave entrepreneurs and old hippies furrowed in the underground that the current laws are more destructive and morally reprehensible than any hit they would take to their own livelihoods from the end of prohibition. ■

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Assassin Nation

Obama's "don't ask, don't tell" test for killing Americans.

By James Bovard

HOW MUCH EVIDENCE should the U.S. government be obliged to show before it kills you? None, according to the Obama administration.

And how much evidence of your wrongdoing should the government be obliged to possess before officially targeting you for killing? That's a secret, according to the president's team. If judges force the government to answer that question, the terrorists will win.

The Obama administration now claims a right to kill American citizens without trial, without notice, and without any chance for the marked men or women to object legally. The Bush administration's "targeted killing" program has been radically expanded to include Americans far from any war zone. Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair testified earlier this year that the targeting-to-kill decision depends only on "whether that American is involved in a group that is trying to attack us."

As former CIA agent Phil Giraldi noted in this magazine last April, "involved" is one helluva vague standard. And the list of officially designated terrorist groups has little or nothing to do with whether those organizations actually pose significant danger to the United States.

The poster boy for the targeted killing program is Anwar al-Awlaki, an American-born Muslim cleric who is reportedly in Yemen. The Obama administration touts allegations that al-Awlaki helped spark the slaughter at Ford Hood, Texas, inspired the attempt to

destroy a jetliner on Christmas Day 2009, and has done other dastardly things that the government has not yet disclosed (for our own good, of course). Al-Awlaki might well be a four-star bastard, but government press releases and background briefings have not previously been sufficient to justify capital punishment.

The American Civil Liberties Union is suing to compel Uncle Sam "to disclose the legal standard it uses to place U.S. citizens on government kill lists." The Obama administration has responded by invoking the doctrine of state secrets, effectively claiming that national security demands that these policies be kept hidden. By hiding behind state secrets, the feds don't even have to explain why the law doesn't apply to their actions.

In oral arguments in federal court on Nov. 9, Justice Department attorney Douglas Letter asserted that no judge has authority to be "looking over the shoulder" of the Obama administration's targeted-killing program. Letter declared that the program involves "the very core powers of the president as commander-in-chief." When Obama campaigned for the presidency in 2008, entitling the president to kill Americans without trial was not one of the reforms he promised.

The main difference between the Bush administration and the Obama administration is that the Obama team publicly claims a right to do what Bush's lawyers authorized behind closed doors. Steven Bradbury, head of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel,

told the Senate Intelligence Committee in early 2006 that Bush could order killings of suspected terrorists within the United States. When *Newsweek* contacted the Justice Department to verify this novel legal doctrine, spokeswoman Tasia Scolinos stressed that Bradbury's comments occurred during an "off-the-record briefing." *Newsweek's* report generated no media stir. Apparently, unless the government disclosed that it had actually begun assassinations within the United States, it was a non-story.

An article by Charlie Savage in the *New York Times* in mid-September noted that "There is widespread agreement among the administration's legal team that it is lawful for President Obama to authorize the killing of someone like Mr. Awlaki."

It is comforting to know that top political appointees concur that some "law" gives them the right to assassinate Americans. But this is the same "legal" standard the Bush team used to justify torture. Since Bush's lawyers told him that waterboarding wasn't torture—despite a hundred years of U.S. court decisions to the contrary—the president was blameless, or so he recently claimed to NBC's Matt Lauer.

There are other ominous parallels with the worst abuses of the Bush administration. When Bush decreed in November 2001 that he had the authority perpetually to detain anyone as an enemy combatant, based solely on his own assertion, administration defenders rushed to assure the media that the new policy did not apply to Americans or inside the

United States. Seven months later, after José Padilla was arrested in Chicago and labeled an enemy combatant, the administration acted as if only fools would believe the president would not use his boundless power any way he could.

Similarly, Obama's power grab has not spurred much opposition, perhaps in part because it is assumed to apply only to killing Americans abroad. (Hopefully farther away than Niagara Falls, Canada.) But the basis of the policy is that the entire world is a battlefield, thus the president has unlimited "commander in chief" powers everywhere.

Once the principle is accepted that the U.S. government can label Americans as enemies of the state and kill them without judicial nicety, the bureaucratic wish list of targets will continually expand. A similar metamorphosis occurred when the FBI decided to use illegal powers to target people who garnered official displeasure. Nixon White House aide Tom Charles Huston explained that the FBI's COINTELPRO program continually stretched its target list "from the kid with a bomb to the kid with a picket sign, and from the kid with the picket sign to the kid with the bumper sticker of the opposing candidate. And you just keep going down the line."

Blank checks for killing enemies of the state is the recipe for domestic tranquility that most dictatorships have used throughout history. And apparently this is a standard that many Americans might embrace. Some movement conservatives—such as columnist Jonah Goldberg—are already whooping for the U.S. government to assassinate people such as Wikileaks founder Julian Assange. Should the government be entitled to kill anyone who exposes its lies? Or should the standard be broader, permitting governments to kill anyone who is inconvenient?

The Obama administration's position "would allow the executive unreview-

able authority to target and kill any U.S. citizen it deems a suspect of terrorism anywhere," according to Center for Constitutional Rights attorney Pardiss Kebriae. And the feds have a horrible batting average when it comes to accurately identifying terrorist suspects. In the six weeks after the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. government rounded up 1,200 people as suspected terrorists or terrorist supporters. None of the detainees proved to have links to the attacks. And as the ACLU noted earlier this year, "the government has failed to prove the lawfulness of imprisoning individual Guantanamo detainees in 34 of the 48 cases that have been reviewed by the federal courts thus far, even though the government had years to gather and analyze evidence for those cases and had itself determined that those prisoners were detainable."

In fact, debacles over false charges against Gitmo detainees may have spurred the expansion of the targeted-killing program. Dead men file no appeals. Assassinations could be less embarrassing than trials because most of the American media will roll over and permit the government to blacken its victims however it pleases. As long as officials, speaking anonymously, assure reporters that the deceased were bad people, the story is closed.

The Food and Drug Administration recently proposed far more graphic warning labels for cigarette packages. But while the feds are demanding extraordinary measures to inform people about private risks, nothing is being done to warn people of the health risks of an unleashed Leviathan.

What sort of warning labels would be appropriate for Obama's killing program? A picture of a sniper's crosshairs on a mother holding a baby in her cabin door, à la Vicki Weaver? A picture of young demonstrators lying dead on the ground after a National Guard volley, à

la Kent State? A picture of children lolling in the streets moments before they are obliterated, courtesy of the helicopter gun-sight video from the Wiki-Leaked "Collateral Murder" recording made by the U.S. military in Iraq?

If Obama gets away with this power-grab, the rhetoric for the 2012 race for the White House should be retuned. Instead of listening to candidates compete based on the number of new benefits they promise to lavish upon voters, prudent citizens will focus on which presidential candidate seems least likely to kill them or members of their family. We might hear campaign slogans like "Vote for Smith: he won't have you killed unless all of his top advisers agree you deserve to die." Unfortunately, as with other campaign promises, there will be no way for voters to compel politicians to honor their pledges.

Obama's doctrine enabling the targeted killing of American citizens is at least as much an assassination of the Constitution as anything George W. Bush perpetrated. Yet most of the media has ignored the issue or treated it like an arcane legal dispute of interest only to people in desert hideaways 6,000 miles away. The more power the government has seized, the more craven the media has become.

Thanks to sovereign immunity and cowardly judges, it is unlikely that any Obama administration official will be held liable, regardless of whom the U.S. government slays. Americans have had plenty of warnings that the federal government is destroying the leashes the Founding Fathers created. Once it is accepted that the executive branch is entitled to kill Americans without a trial, only damn fools should expect Leviathan to limit its ravages here and abroad. ■

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Breaking Washington's Rules

How an empire can become a republic again.

By Andrew J. Bacevich

AS A BOY GROWING UP in the Midwest during the early years of the Cold War, I developed a clear understanding of what differentiated Americans from their communist adversaries. Simply put, we were pragmatists and they were ideologues. On our side flexibility and common sense prevailed; whatever worked, we were for it. In contrast, the people on the other side were rigid and dogmatic; bombast and posturing mattered more than results. The newsreels of the time told the tale: communist leaders barked ridiculous demands; the docile masses chanted prescribed slogans. It was impossible to imagine Americans tolerating such nonsense.

However belatedly, learning has overturned these youthful impressions. "Whatever works" no longer seems to guide everyday American behavior, if it ever did. Americans view it as their birthright that reality should satisfy desire. Forget *e pluribus unum*. "Whatever I want" has become the operative national motto. In the meantime, when it comes to politics, Americans do put up with nonsense. Week in and week out, members of a jaded governing class, purporting to speak for "the American people," mouth tired clichés that would have caused members of the Soviet Politburo to blush with embarrassment.

The world—we are incessantly told—is becoming ever smaller, more complex, and more dangerous. Therefore, it becomes necessary for the nation to intensify the efforts undertaken to "keep America safe," while also, of course, advancing the cause of world peace.

Achieving these aims—it is said—requires the United States to funnel ever greater sums of money to the Pentagon to develop new means of projecting power, and to hold itself in readiness for new expeditions deemed essential to pacify (or liberate) some dark and troubled quarter of the globe.

At one level, we can with little difficulty calculate the cost of these efforts: the untold billions of dollars added annually to the national debt and the mounting toll of dead and wounded U.S. troops provide one gauge.

At a deeper level, the costs of adhering to the Washington consensus defy measurement: families shattered by loss; veterans bearing the physical and psychological scars of combat; the perpetuation of ponderous bureaucracies subsisting in a climate of secrecy, dissembling, and outright deception; the distortion of national priorities as the military-industrial complex siphons off scarce resources; environmental devastation produced as a by-product of war and the preparation for war; the evisceration of civic culture that results when a small praetorian guard shoulders the burden of waging perpetual war, while the great majority of citizens purport to revere its members, even as they ignore or profit from their service.

Furthermore, there is no end in sight, even though the conditions that first gave rise to the Washington rules have ceased to exist. U.S. allies in Western Europe and East Asia, weak and vulnerable in the immediate wake of World War II, are today stable, prosperous, and

perfectly capable of defending themselves. The totalitarian ideologies that challenged liberalism in the 20th century have definitively and irrevocably failed. Josef Stalin is long gone, as is the Soviet Empire. Red China has become simply China, valued by Americans as a bountiful source of credit and consumer goods. Although communists still call the shots in Beijing, promoting exports ranks well above promoting Mao's teachings in the party's list of priorities. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, once thought to be the incubator of powerful revolutionary forces, the mullahs find themselves hard-pressed just to maintain order in the streets. Washington's quasi-official enemies list now consists mostly of pygmies: North Korea, a nation unable to feed its own population; Syria, an Israeli punching bag; Venezuela, governed by a clown; and, for old times' sake, Cuba.

The world has by no means entered an era of peace and harmony. Far from it. Yet the threats demanding attention today—terrorism, climate change, drug cartels, Third World underdevelopment and instability, perhaps above all the proliferation of genocidal weapons invented and first employed by the West—have changed, while the solutions proffered by Washington remain largely the same. The conviction that the obligations of leadership require the United States to maintain a global military presence, configure its armed forces for power projection, and employ them to impose change abroad forms the enduring leitmotif of U.S. national-

security policy. Washington clings to its credo not out of necessity, but out of parochial self-interest laced with inertia.

Dwight D. Eisenhower for one would have been appalled. Early in his first term as president, Ike contemplated the awful predicament wrought by the Cold War during its first decade. “What can the world, or any nation in it, hope for” he asked, “if no turning is found on this dread road?” The president proceeded to answer his own question. The worst to be feared would be a ruinous nuclear war.

The best would be this: a life of perpetual fear and tension; a burden of arms draining the wealth and the labor of all peoples; a wasting of strength that defies the American system or the Soviet system or any system to achieve true abundance and happiness for the peoples of this earth.

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signified, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.

Today, for most Americans, the Cold War has become a distant memory. Yet the “life of perpetual fear and tension” that Eisenhower described in 1953, the “burden of arms” that he decried, and “the wasting of strength” that undercuts the prospect of Americans achieving “true abundance and happiness” all persist. In Washington, practices that Eisenhower viewed as temporary expedients are now etched in stone.

Contemplate these three examples: the size of the Pentagon budget, the dimensions of the nuclear arsenal, and the extent of U.S. overseas military presence. If, rather than exceeding the military spending of the rest of the planet, Pentagon outlays merely equaled the combined defense budgets of, say, Russian, China, Iran, North Korea, Syria,

Venezuela, and Cuba, would the United States face great peril? If the U.S. nuclear stockpile consisted of several hundred weapons rather than several thousand, would the United States find itself appreciably more vulnerable to nuclear blackmail or attack? Were the United States, 60-plus years after the end of World War II, finally to withdraw its forces from Germany, Italy, and the rest of Europe, would Americans sleep less easily in their beds at night?

Consider these questions pragmatically and the answer to each is self-evidently no. Consider them from a vantage point within the Washington consensus and you’ll reach a different conclusion.

Adherents of that consensus categorically reject the notion that the defense spending of would-be adversaries could provide a gauge for our own military budget. They argue instead that America’s unique responsibilities require extraordinary capabilities, rendering external constraints unacceptable. Even as U.S. officials condemn others for merely contemplating the acquisition of nuclear weapons, they reject unilateral action to reduce America’s own arsenal—the fancied risks of doing so being too great to contemplate. As for withdrawing U.S. troops from Europe, doing so might—so the argument goes—call into question America’s commitment to its allies and could therefore send the wrong “signal” to unnamed potential enemies. Thus do the Washington rules enforce discipline, precluding the intrusion of aberrant thinking that might engender an actual policy debate in our nation’s capital.

Cui bono? Who benefits from the perpetuation of the Washington rules? The answer to that question helps explain why the national-security consensus persists.

The answer, needless to say, is that Washington itself benefits. The Washington rules deliver profit, power, and privi-

lege to a long list of beneficiaries: elected and appointed officials, corporate executives and corporate lobbyists, admirals and generals, functionaries staffing the national-security apparatus, media personalities, and policy intellectuals from universities and research organizations.

Each year the Pentagon expends hundreds of billions of dollars to raise and support U.S. military forces. This money lubricates Americans politics, filling campaign coffers and providing the source of largesse—jobs and contracts—for distribution to constituents. It provides lucrative “second careers” for retired U.S. military officers hired by weapons manufacturers or by consulting firms appropriately known as “Beltway Bandits.” It funds the activities of think tanks that relentlessly advocate policies guaranteed to fend off challenges to established conventions. “Military-industrial complex” no longer suffices to describe the congeries of interests profiting from and committed to preserving the national-security status quo.

Nor are the benefits simply measurable in cold cash or political influence. The appeal of the Washington rules is psychic as well as substantive. For many, the payoff includes the added, if largely illusory, attraction of occupying a seat within or near what is imagined to be the very cockpit of contemporary history. Before power corrupts it attracts and then seduces.

Challenging the Washington consensus requires establishing the proposition that viable alternatives to permanent war do exist—that a different credo might offer a better way of ensuring the safety and well-being of the American people and even perhaps of fulfilling the mission that Americans persist in believing God or Providence has bestowed upon the United States.

The existing American credo assumes that the world is plastic, that American leaders are uniquely capable of divining

whatever God or Providence intends, and that with its unequalled reserves of power the United States is uniquely positioned to fulfill those intentions. Experience since the dawn of the American Century in 1941, and especially over the course of the last decade, offers little support for these propositions.

The record of American statecraft during the era that began with U.S. entry into World War II and that culminates today with the Long War does not easily reduce to a simple report card. Overall that record is mixed, combining wisdom with folly, generosity with shortsightedness, moments of insight with periods of profound blindness, admirable achievements with reckless misjudgments. The president who devised the Marshall Plan also ordered the bombing of Hiroshima. The president who created the Peace Corps also dabbled in assassination plots. The president who vowed to eliminate evil secretly authorized torture and then either could not bring himself to acknowledge the fact or simply lied about it.

Critics fasten on these contradictions as evidence of Washington's hypocrisy. What they actually reveal is the intractability of the human condition. Even the self-assigned agent of salvation persistently strays from the path of righteousness. No wonder the world at large remains stubbornly resistant to redemption. Notwithstanding prophetic pronouncements issued by American leaders, when it comes to discerning the future they, like other statesmen, fly blind. The leader of the Free World, surrounded by his impressively credentialed advisers, is hardly more capable of divining the global future than is a roomful of reasonably well-informed high-school students.

As with American clairvoyance, so too with American power: events have exposed its limits. Especially in economic terms, it is today a wasting asset.

Any new credo must take into

account these lessons of the era now drawing to a close, acknowledging the recalcitrance of humankind, the difficulty of deciphering history's purposes, and the importance of husbanding American power.

These very insights formed the basis of an earlier credo, nurtured across many generations until swept aside by the conceits of the American Century. Proponents of this earlier credo did not question the existence of an American mission. Embracing John Winthrop's charge, issued to his followers on the eve of founding Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, they too sought to create a "city upon a hill." This defined America's obligation. Yet in discharging that obligation, in their view, the city's inhabitants should seek not to compel or enforce, but to exemplify and illuminate.

For the Founders, and for the generations that followed them, here was the basis of a distinctively American approach to leadership, informed by a conviction that self-mastery should take precedence over mastering others. This Founders' credo was neither liberal nor conservative. It transcended partisanship, blending both idealism and realism, emphasizing patience rather than immediacy, preferring influence to coercion. Until the end of the 19th century, this conception of America as exemplar, endorsed by figures as varied in outlook and disposition as George Washington and John Quincy Adams, commanded widespread assent.

With the advent of World War II, the tradition of America as exemplar—now widely and erroneously characterized as isolationism—stood almost completely discredited. In Washington after 1945, it carried no weight at all. In official circles, fixing the world now took precedence over remedying whatever ailments afflicted the United States.

Outside of such circles, an awareness of America's own imperfections—

social, political, cultural, and moral—survived. The advent of the postwar American credo, with all of the costly undertakings that trailed in its wake, fostered for a minority a renewed appreciation of the all but forgotten Founders' credo. Among critics of U.S. foreign policy, the old tradition of America as exemplar enjoyed a quiet renaissance.

Those critics questioned the wisdom and the feasibility of forcibly attempting to remake the world in America's image. They believed that even to make the attempt was to court corruption in the form of imperialism and militarism, thereby compromising republican institutions at home. Representing no one party but instead a great diversity of perspective, they insisted that, if America has a mission, that mission is to model freedom rather than to impose it.

The proper aim of American statecraft is not to redeem humankind or to prescribe some specific world order, nor to police the planet by force of arms. Its purpose is to permit Americans to avail themselves of the right of self-determination as they seek to create at home a "more perfect union." Any policy impeding that enterprise—as open-ended war surely does—is misguided and pernicious.

Come home and resurrecting the nation's true vocation becomes a possibility. Cling to the existing American credo and the betrayal of that vocation is assured. For anyone genuinely interested in education—a category that necessarily excludes partisans and ideologues—surely this stands out as a conclusion that the events of the post-9/11 era, and indeed the entire American Century, have made manifest.

Even if self-determination qualifies as a right, it is certainly not a gift. As with any right, it requires safeguards. To ensure that others will refrain from interfering with its efforts to create a more perfect union, the United States requires power. Yet in light of the credo described

above, how precisely should the United States formulate and wield that power?

Here, too, there exists an alternative tradition to which Americans today could repair, should they choose to do so. This tradition harks back to the nearly forgotten anti-imperial origins of the Republic. Succinctly captured in the motto “Don’t Tread on Me,” this tradition is one that does not seek trouble but insists that others will accord the United States respect. Updated for our own time, it might translate into the following:

First, the purpose of the U.S. military is not to combat evil or remake the world, but to defend the United States and its most vital interests. However necessary, military power itself is neither good nor inherently desirable. Any nation defining itself in terms of military might is well down the road to perdition, as earlier generations of Americans instinctively understood. As for military supremacy, the lessons of the past are quite clear. It is an illusion and its pursuit an invitation to mischief, if not disaster. Therefore, the United States should maintain only those forces required to accomplish the defense establishment’s core mission.

Second, the primary duty station of the American soldier is in America. Just as the U.S. military should not be a global police force, so too it should not be a global occupation force. Specific circumstances may from time to time require the United States on a temporary basis to establish a military presence abroad. Yet rather than defining the norm, Americans should view this prospect as a sharp departure, entailing public debate and prior congressional authorization. Dismantling the Pentagon’s sprawling network of existing bases promises to be a lengthy process. Priority should be given to those regions where the American presence costs the most while accomplishing the least. According to those criteria, U.S. troops should withdraw from the Persian Gulf

and Central Asia forthwith.

Third, consistent with the Just War tradition, the United States should employ force only as a last resort and only in self-defense. The Bush Doctrine of preventive war—the United States bestowing on itself the exclusive prerogative of employing force against ostensible threats even before they materialize—is a moral and strategic abomination, the very inverse of a prudent and enlightened statecraft. Concocted by George W. Bush to justify his needless and misguided 2003 invasion of Iraq, this doctrine still awaits explicit abrogation by authorities in Washington. Never again should the United States undertake a “war of choice” informed by fantasies that violence provides a shortcut to resolving history’s complexities.

Were this alternative triad to become the basis for policy, dramatic changes in the U.S. national-security posture would ensue. Military spending would decrease appreciably. The Pentagon’s global footprint would shrink. Weapons manufacturers would see their profits plummet. Beltway Bandits would close up shop. The ranks of defense-oriented think tanks would thin. These changes, in turn, would narrow the range of options available for employing force, obliging policy makers to exhibit greater restraint in intervening abroad. With resources currently devoted to rehabilitating Baghdad or Kabul freed up, the cause of rehabilitating Cleveland and Detroit might finally attract a following.

Popular susceptibility to fear-mongering by those always conjuring up new national emergencies might also wane and with it the average American’s willingness to allow some freshly discovered “axis of evil” to dictate the nation’s priorities. The imperial presidency’s ability to evoke awe and command deference would likewise diminish. With that, the possibility of responsible and genuinely democratic government might present itself.

Of fundamental importance, the identity of the American soldier would undergo substantial revision. The warrior-professional brought home from distant provinces of empire might once again become the citizen-protector of the nation. Rather than serving as an instrument of the state, the soldier might simply defend the country—a cause which Americans, regardless of class or political orientation, might once again see as their own.

This very prospect—the likelihood of any departure from the Washington rules reducing the privileges that Washington has long enjoyed—helps explain the tenacity of those intent on preserving the status quo. If change is to come, it must come from the people. Yet unless Americans finally awaken to the fact that they’ve been had, Washington will continue to have its way.

So the need for education—summoning Americans to take on the responsibilities of an active and engaged citizenship—has become acute. Americans today must reckon with a contradiction of gaping proportions. Promising prosperity and peace, the Washington rules are propelling the United States toward insolvency and perpetual war. Over the horizon a shipwreck of epic proportions awaits. To acknowledge the danger we face is to make learning—and perhaps even a course change—possible. To willfully ignore the danger is to become complicit in the destruction of what most Americans profess to hold dear. ■

Andrew J. Bacevich is professor of history and international relations at Boston University. This essay is adapted from Washington Rules: America’s Path to Permanent War. Reprinted by arrangement with Metropolitan Books, an imprint of Henry Holt and Company, LLC. Copyright © 2010 by Andrew J. Bacevich. All rights reserved.



War for Women

The interesting question about the war in Afghanistan is not what its outcome will be—the “Coalition” will not be the first foreigners to conquer the country—but why it continues.

The establishment’s answer remains 9/11. But al-Qaeda now has little or no presence in Afghanistan. Its bases in Pakistan are more useful than any potential Afghan camps. Unlike Washington, al-Qaeda understands that Pakistan is strategically a vastly more important prize than Afghanistan. Reportedly, the Taliban have already offered to keep al-Qaeda out as part of a peace deal. (Osama and company were neither easy nor grateful guests.) So why are we still fighting?

I suspect the question can be answered in one word: feminism. One of the better recent pieces on the war, a column by anthropologist Scott Atran, “Turning the Taliban Against Al Qaeda” in the October 27 *New York Times*, stated:

Washington’s goals officially remain those stated by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton: to strengthen Afghan Army forces and to ‘reintegrate’ the supposedly ‘moderate’ Taliban, that is, fighters who will lay down arms and respect the Afghan Constitution, including its Western-inspired provisions to respect human rights and equality of women in the public sphere.

All of these conditions are fanciful, and together they represent a diktat that a victorious America might impose on a beaten Taliban—an unlikely situation. But the important question is not which

conditions the Taliban might accept. Rather, it is which stipulations the Obama White House regards as domestic political requirements. One leaps from the page: “the equality of women.”

No Democratic administration would dare say to feminists, who are a key component of the Left’s coalition, “Sorry, but feminism doesn’t travel well to Afghanistan. Pashtun women will continue to have two options: they can be in their home, or they can be in their grave.” The banshee wails would rise to the heavens.

American feminists are no doubt willing to see the war go on indefinitely in pursuit of their fantasy. After all, most of the American dead are male soldiers and Marines, a type of man feminists particularly loathe.

But what might be the public reaction if flyover-land Americans, who provide most of our armed forces’ recruits, figured out that their kids are coming home in boxes because we are at war for feminism? Many of them are less than enthusiastic about that ideology here at home.

Meanwhile, as feminism blocks any prospect of a negotiated peace, time is working against us over there. Thus far, the Afghan War has offered us an advantage unusual in Fourth Generation conflicts. We have someone with whom to negotiate.

Normally, the endless fragmentation characteristic of Fourth Generation forces leaves no one with whom to sit

down in Paris and make peace because no local leader can deliver more than a splinter of the enemy. In contrast, Mullah Omar can probably supply something that resembles peace, at least by Afghan standards.

In his column, Atran warns that our tactical military success may be eroding that strategic advantage. As U.S. special-operations forces succeed in killing or capturing mid-level Taliban leaders, enemy ranks are being replenished by younger fighters who are less likely to take orders from Mullah Omar. Atran writes:

As with the older Taliban, their ideology—a peculiar blend of pan-Islamic Shariah law and Pashtun customs—is ‘not for sale,’ as one leader told a *Times* reporter. But the new cohort increasingly decides how these beliefs are imposed on the ground: recently the Quetta Shura sent a Muslim scholar to chastise a group of youthful commanders in Paktia Province who were not following Mullah Omar’s directives; they promptly killed him.

It is often the case that governments make decisions on military and foreign policy based on domestic political considerations rather than realities on the ground. Unfortunately, by subordinating the realities in Afghanistan to political factors, the Obama administration leaves our armed forces playing for time when time is working against them. The consequences could be worse than the Kilkenny cat howls of jilted feminists, for the country if not for the Democratic Party. ■

Ostrich America

The ludicrous, destructive, curiously enduring myth of U.S. isolationism.

By Chase Madar

OF ALL THE RECEIVED IDEAS that clog America's foreign-policy discourse, none is more at variance with reality than the threat of so-called isolationism. We have never been more engaged with every corner of the world, yet we have never been lectured more often about the consequences of "retreating within our borders." The more countries we attack—Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen—the more dire warnings we get about national introversion. The specter of isolationism has never looked healthier.

A case in point was George W. Bush's 2006 State of the Union address, a venue he used to tell a spine-chilling tale. With his foreign policy exploding all around him, Bush warned against an even more disastrous alternative: there were those who would "tie our hands" and have us "retreat within our borders." From the tenor of his talk, he seemed to think that Americans were about to burn down both the Pentagon and Department of State, beat defense intellectuals into postal workers, and force every house in the land to set up a little steel foundry in the back yard—just like in the Great Leap Forward—while learning to live on grubs and wild mountain honey.

Of course, this is absurd: as many pointed out in response to this scare-mongering, there are no isolationists in America—not in either political party, not in the media, and not in the academy. (The i-word is often used as a synonym for unilateralism. Here I am assigning only its most common meaning: a tendency to ignore security threats beyond territorial borders and disen-

gage diplomatically, politically, and economically from the rest of the world.) Nevertheless, the menace of a return to geopolitical autarky is carted out whenever our sclerotically narrow foreign-policy consensus gets an unwelcome jolt. This habit of mind did not end with the exit of George W. Bush.

It was predictable, for instance, that the publication earlier this year of Andrew Bacevich's latest study of the military-industrial complex, *Washington Rules*, would draw fresh choruses of "we can't just retreat within our borders." Andrew Exum, impresario of counterinsurgency warfare at the Center for a New American Security, poutily suggested that Bacevich just come out and own up to being an isolationist. For its part, the *Washington Times* qualified its grudging praise of *Washington Rules* with the backhanded aside that "unlike many of his ideological compatriots, Mr. Bacevich understands and respects the military and doesn't advocate withdrawing from the world."

Bacevich is far from the only public figure to be smeared so. Earlier this year, one of the homemade counterterrorism experts at the Intelwire blog dropped the i-bomb on Salon.com columnist Glenn Greenwald for proposing withdrawal from Afghanistan and Pakistan. (Did we Americans live in geopolitical solitude before our drones hammered Waziristan?) And during the last presidential election, editorialists of all stripes wasted no time in tarring Dennis Kucinich and Ron Paul as ostrich-headed isolationists; they were wholly

unsuitable for making foreign policy and had flunked the most elementary lessons of U.S. diplomatic history.

But what does the historical record teach us? According to a very common narrative, the 1920s and '30s were, in the words of one skeptical historian, "a period when the United States disregarded its world responsibilities by getting inebriated on the homemade gin of isolationism." In the aftermath of the Great War, a parochial and selfish Senate failed to ratify America's accession to the League of Nations, and soon the U.S. was jitterbugging on the sidelines as the world went to hell. If only we had not withdrawn within our borders, the story goes, we could have prevented the rise of fascism, rolled back the Japanese empire, smashed the fledgling Soviet Union, and staved off World War II. Instead, in our smug naïveté, we were caught unprepared by the attack on Pearl Harbor, which many a talking head to this day points to as the watery grave of American isolationism.

Some version of this parable is holy writ not just to neoconservative Republicans but to our entire foreign-policy establishment, including Democratic Party courtiers like the late Arthur Schlesinger Jr.—who muttered darkly of an interwar "return to the womb"—as well as a new generation of liberal hawks like Peter Beinart.

We should first note that this story-with-a-moral assumes American omnipotence: if any evil is committed anywhere in the world—be it the Ukrainian famine, the Rape of Nanking, or the rise of Benito

Mussolini—it is only because we Americans selfishly failed to prevent it. But leaving this dubious and arrogant premise aside, we might ask if the standard account of interwar isolation bears any resemblance to the record.

History is indeed clear, though not in the way our iso-baiters would have us think. The interwar years were in fact marked by intense American extraversion: cultural, economic, and political. A quarter-million American tourists spent over \$300 million traveling Europe in 1929, while Ernest Hemingway, Josephine Baker, and T.S. Eliot took their acts abroad. Overseas missionary activity exploded. By 1930, the United States had more foreign direct investment than France, Holland, and Germany combined. Even with the Smoot-Hawley tariff, trade between the U.S. and Latin America tripled in the decade before 1941. The United States, emerging from the Great War as the world's largest creditor nation, negotiated British, French, and German war debts with the Dawes Plan in 1924 and the Locarno Convention of 1925. This is isolationism?

One of the ironies of this legend is that those interwar senators retrospectively tagged as isolationists—known in their time as “Peace Progressives”—were among the most outward-looking politicians of their era. The Peace Progressives were mostly Western and Midwestern Republicans, most prominent among them Robert La Follette of Wisconsin, William Borah (“The Lion of Idaho”), and Hiram Johnson of California. They successfully rolled back long-standing U.S. military occupations in the Caribbean and Central America, and their efforts arguably averted war with Mexico in the 1920s. Borah took the lead in forging multilateral arms-reduction treaties with Great Britain and Japan.

These politicians worked closely with a burgeoning domestic peace movement, most notably the Women's Inter-

national League for Peace and Freedom, one of the most successful antiwar groups in our history. The Peace Progressives were also farsighted enough to support diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union for both economic and security reasons. Borah warned in 1923 that diplomatic isolation of the USSR would force it closer to Germany, an admonition that proved prophetic. These statesmen were not pacifists, but they preferred to use diplomacy, financial muscle, and “soft power” over military force, and they took the long view.

The worst part of their supposed isolationism, we are told, is that it left America's armed services unprepared for World War II, far outstripped by Japan and Germany's military build-ups. This too is a fact-free legend. Even during the Great Depression, Army appropriations remained at more than twice the pre-World War I level; the officer corps stayed at double its prewar size. The 1930s also brought the development of heavy cruisers and aircraft carriers, which would provide the decisive advantage in the war with Japan.

As for the Neutrality Acts of the mid-1930s, they bore the same relation to neutrality that today's Patriot Act bears to patriotism. Those acts, pushed in large part by congressional hawks eager to provide Roosevelt with legislative cover for war preparation, did nothing to impede America's secret collaboration with the French Air Force; the transport of U.S. military aircraft and 50 warships to Great Britain, along with aid shipments that ran the German blockade; the development with British military scientists of radar technology; and, by the autumn of 1941, undeclared war against Axis ships in the west Atlantic. True, America's military could have been more prepared for a total war of unprecedented scope. But the armed forces were by no means blindsided by the conflict.

Not for nothing then do many diplomatic historians dismiss the folklore of interwar isolationism and its bogus lessons. University of Kentucky historian George C. Herring, author of Oxford University Press's encyclopedic history of American foreign relations, *From Colony to Superpower*, calls isolationism one of the great myths of U.S. history.

Yet even some of the canniest public intellectuals are stuck on this legend, finding in isolationism a useful foil. Take for instance the New America Foundation's Michael Lind, who in *The American Way of Strategy* triangulates a path for his own “liberal realism” between the twin follies of the neoconservative hegemonists of today and the “anachronistic” isolationism of yore. Lind equates the Peace Progressives' rejection of the League of Nations with today's neoconservative rejection of United Nations restraints on the use of force. This equation is facile enough, but likening the trigger-happy reign of Bush, Cheney, and now Obama with the agile and effective diplomacy of internationalists like Borah simply will not do.

(Perhaps we should not be surprised when Lind and countless lesser writers categorize the likes of Borah as “isolationists” then quickly move on. After all, the Peace Progressives scramble the contemporary political compass in a way that is bound to disorient pundits in a hurry. An Idaho Republican who opposed with equal vigor to the League of Nations and U.S. imperialism in Latin America, all the while working with proto-feminist peace groups to urge détente with the Soviet Union? The past really is a different country.)

Apparently each generation must refute anew the lurid buncombe of “isolationism.” In the 1920s, Borah himself noted that the charge “does not rise even to the level of sophistry,” but the globalizing ambitions of the Cold War breathed new life into the bugbear. New Left histo-

rian William Appleman Williams's landmark 1959 study, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, took apart the "legend" of interwar isolationism in great detail and laid the foundation for revisionist Cold War historiography as now practiced by libertarians, anti-interventionist conservatives, and radicals alike. (Williams, as a man of the Left, is surely one of those anti-American ideologues that the *Washington Times* warned us about—that Williams was also an Annapolis graduate twice wounded in the Pacific theater should not get in the way of a good smear.)

In a splendid article published earlier this year in *Foreign Policy Analysis*, political scientist Bear F. Braumoeller refutes "The Myth of American Isolation" all over again for a new century, with special attention to the 1930s. Braumoeller helpfully adduces a few examples of what real geopolitical isolation looks like: Tokugawa Japan, Cold War Albania, and contemporary North Korea.

Today, with American bases spread out over a hundred nations, the possibility of our metamorphosing into a hermit kingdom is not even farfetched. Yet the deeply ingrained dichotomy between open-ended global warfare and autarkic solitude endures, with even the mildest proposals for retrenchment or partial demilitarization evoking new scaremongering. Suggest, for instance, that Iran's joining India, Pakistan, and Israel as a nuclear power is not a national-security threat, and even well-educated Americans, the kind who have traveled to other countries, are liable to respond that "we can't just retreat within our borders."

All myths survive for a reason, and the longevity of this one is easy enough to figure. As Bacevich explains, "Isolationism survives in contemporary American political discourse because it retains utility as a cheap device employed to impose discipline. Think of it as akin to red-baiting—conjuring up

bogus fears to enforce conformity in the realm of foreign policy."

Will our elites ever unlearn this cherished campfire frightener? As William Appleman Williams wrote in 1959, this myth "not only deforms the history of the decade from 1919 to 1930, but it also twists the story of American entry into World War II and warps the record of the cold war." Fifty years on, our foreign-policy discourse is choked with the same

spurious folklore, and we should not be surprised if Obama starts making noises about imaginary isolationists to justify his expansive vision of the U.S. military's mission. With American grand strategy badly in need of recalibration, it is long past time to get rid of the ridiculous myth of isolationism. ■

Chase Madar is a lawyer in New York City.

Shock and Waugh

The most anarchic writer of our age was a man of the Old Right.

By Neil Clark

Thank you for your letter. Would it give you comfort if I suggest you call yourself the Official Auberon Waugh Appreciation Society rather than the Unofficial Auberon Waugh Appreciation Society? I know of no rivals.

Of course I am trying to get Blair indicted for war crimes. It will take a bit of time and I fear I have rather squabbled with the Crown Prosecution Service over the years, but we must always hope for the best.

Yours sincerely,

Auberon Waugh

Combe Florey, Somerset

A COPY OF THE FAX that my friend Stuart Carr and I received from the late Auberon Waugh on June 6, 1999 is among my most treasured possessions. As two antiwar paleo-leftists living in Budapest, we had been appalled at Britain's leading role in the bombing of neighboring Yugoslavia. Reading the British papers at that time was depressing—they were full of NATO propaganda about alleged Ser-

bian atrocities; how Slobodan Milosevic, the Yugoslav President, was the new Hitler; and why the war on one of Europe's most Anglophile nations was such a good thing. But one voice stood out against the legion of bloodthirsty laptop bombardiers. It belonged not to a leftist but to a man described as the most reactionary conservative of his age.

Auberon Waugh hated war. He loathed the pomposity of Western politicians who thought they had a divine right to go around the world intervening in the affairs of sovereign states. Lots of people are calling for the arrest of Tony Blair for war crimes in 2010, but very few were doing so in 1999, when Waugh was. "The charge against Tony Blair is not so much that he took a very stupid decision ... or even that his high moral pose may have been a front for ordinary self-importance and power mania," Waugh wrote in the *Sunday Telegraph*. "The reason that he must be arrested and brought to trial for war crimes is that we cannot allow this sort of thing to happen again. We cannot accept that the U.S., supported by any

group of countries, may bomb any nation whose domestic policies it finds objectionable. Such a system would only work if the President of the United States were God, which he obviously isn't and never has been."

Sadly, Waugh did not succeed in his attempt to have the "twerpish" Blair arrested. Just 18 months after he penned his article, Bron was dead at the age of 61. No one else took up the task of trying to hold Blair to account, with the result that four years later the British Prime Minister did it all again—as Waugh had predicted—this time in Iraq, with even more bloody consequences than in Yugoslavia.

Much like his father, the novelist Evelyn Waugh, Bron was dismissed by his liberal-left critics as an flippant eccentric whose Old Right opinions were of no account in the Brave New World of late 20th-century Britain. Yet Auberon Waugh's work—laugh-out-loud funny as most of it is—was far more profound and prescient than most supposedly serious writers of the time. Ferdinand Mount called him "the prophet of a generation." Rereading his articles and columns, one is struck by just how far ahead of the game Waugh was. On foreign affairs, he was truly in a class of his own.

"How can any intelligent person be expected to believe that a country of ... mostly impoverished desert dwellers, poses a threat to world peace?" he wrote of Iraq in 1998, five years before the neocon WMD hoax went into overdrive.

During the first Gulf War in 1991, Waugh was almost alone in challenging the belief that Saddam Hussein's regime, by virtue of being a dictatorship, lacked popular support. "For the purposes of this war, we were assured that Saddam Hussein ruled by terror and was detested by all his people. Yet we see him cheered by huge crowds with every sign of genuine enthusiasm wherever he goes in Iraq. How are we expected to know which are the propaganda dupes,

the Iraqis or us?"

In 1999, while the vast majority of Western political commentators fell into line and regurgitated the Clinton-Blair line that the Serbs were the new Nazis and needed a good dose of humanitarian bombing, Waugh defiantly claimed that Serbian crimes had been "deliberately exaggerated"—which, of course, they had been.

Waugh got it right more often than the more serious-minded members of the fourth estate because he acted on the premise that politicians are inveterate liars, especially when they try to drum up support for military interventions.

He rejected the notion that Western leaders—because they had nice smiles and wore nice suits and had come to power through democratic elections—were necessarily more virtuous than the heads of other nations. "The main trouble with our limited democracy is the scope it gives to the power maniacs in society to impose their bossy urges and fatuous opinions," he wrote. "It may be lovely for bossy people who like deciding how the rest of us should live, but it is hell for those at the receiving end."

The basic problem, according to Waugh, was that politics attracts all the wrong people. "Politics is for social and emotional misfits. The purpose of politics is to help them overcome their feelings of inferiority and compensate for their personal inadequacies in the pursuit of power." By contrast, the people who would make the best leaders have no interest in public office—they are far too nice and modest to think they should have authority over others.

Although strongly opposed to what he labeled "the socialism," Waugh was no fan of modern globalized capitalism either, holding that it led to a world of "noise, smell, dirt and accompanying moral pollution." He had a soft spot for sincere and sweet-natured communists like his friend Paul Foot, a leading light

with the Socialist Workers Party. "For those who find it hard to believe how anyone can claim to believe in workers power without being a knave or a rogue, I produce Footie as my first exhibit. He is clever and funny and kind. Obviously there is a screw loose somewhere, but we all have our oddities." When the left-wing magazine *LM* (formerly *Living Marxism*) was threatened by a lawsuit brought by the media giant ITN, Waugh rallied to the journal's defense.

Waugh's basic political creed was that Britain and the world would be a lot happier if everyone minded their own business. His son Alexander writes that the only time he can ever recall his father being rude to anybody was when a "whining American lady with blue-rinse hair" in the Doge's Palace, Venice berated him for walking the wrong way down a passage between two galleries. "Go away you ugly old tart" was Waugh's reply, which earned him instant hero status in his son's eyes.

Waugh's pen could be cruel, but more often than not his targets earned their treatment. He remorselessly lampooned the bossy, the boring, and the pretentious. "Anyone who claims to understand who is fighting whom in Bosnia, or why, should be exposed immediately as a posturing braggart," he declared. When the model Jerry Hall, a judge for the literary Whitbread Prize, announced herself a devotee of the works of James Joyce, Waugh sprang into action. "*Ulysses*, in which a single character, Leopold Bloom, wanders round Dublin for a day, was possibly the worst idea for a novel that anybody ever had, but it has been seized upon by generations of insecure students and academics to demonstrate their intellectual superiority. ... The danger of dumbing down is equally balanced by the danger of dumbing up. Jerry Hall would appear to represent the second danger."

Always the contrarian, Waugh took great delight in ridiculing the latest pop-

ular fads and fashions. He rubbished claims that AIDS posed a huge threat to Western heterosexuals or that passive smoking could seriously damage one's health.

He railed against drunk-driving laws—"Only three percent of drivers in accidents involving injury or death give positive breath tests. A case can be made for saying it is more dangerous to drive without having had any alcohol at all"—and at politicians lecturing us on how we should live our lives.

Waugh had the traditionalist's hatred of modernity in all its forms. "He shared his father's distaste for modern art, which he considered to be largely fraudulent, modern architecture, which he relentlessly attacked, and modern politics," observed the novelist A.N. Wilson. He was no great fan of the modern Conservative Party either: "the new Conservatives are a small minority of the electorate, odious to everyone except themselves. Like most traditional conservatives, I will have nothing to do with them. If [William] Hague ever comes to power, I will go and live in Bergerac."

He reveled in his ignorance of popular culture. "For more than 10 years I have been reading about Rod Stewart's marital and amorous adventures in the tabloid press with great interest. This week it suddenly occurred to me that I did not know whether Stewart is a racing car driver, a footballer, a radio comedian or a television soap actor. On Thursday, for reasons which I cannot now remember, I decided to inquire. I was told he is a pop singer."

Vituperative in print, in private Waugh was a genial and kindly man. He listened attentively to others and never sought to dominate a conversation. "People were terrified of meeting my father," Alexander Waugh recalls. "They imagined him to be sharp, aggressive and impatient of other people's opinions, but he was none of those things."

James Fergusson remembers an occasion when Waugh had to deal with a drunken and boorish speaker at a lunch of the Royal Society of Literature. Despite being patronized by the man, Waugh was "civility personified" and later on in the evening, "without an unkind word," steered "the wretch" into a taxi.

If Waugh the traditional conservative was out of step with the times in left-leaning 1970s Britain, he was even more of a fish out of water in the shallow, money-obsessed 1980s. In one of the most poignant passages in his autobiography *Will This Do?* he recalls attending his last *Spectator* party in the summer of 1989.

I was asked to dinner afterwards but found myself sitting next to some young persons on the business and advertising side who not only did not recognise me but had no idea, when I told them who I was, that I was a journalist and contributor to the magazine. They were perfectly polite and we had a good conversation about their career prospects, which was the only thing which appeared to interest them.

Waugh entered the 21st century in failing health, and his death on Jan. 16, 2001 was no surprise to friends and family. But how very sad and unfortunate that he died at the start of a decade when we required his brand of High Tory skepticism more than ever.

In 2002 and 2003, we desperately needed him to have been around to poke fun at scare stories about Iraq's nonexistent weapons of mass destruction. He would have been equally scathing about the War on Terror and the way our governments were deliberately hyping the terror threat in order to increase their control over us. If Waugh were alive today, I'm sure he'd be mocking the latest outlandish neocon conspiracy theory—namely that the Islamic Republic of Iran is rapidly developing

nuclear weapons and poses a threat to the peace and security of the world. And he'd be appalled at the way that Britons, who never surrendered to the Nazis, tamely allowed their bossy-boots government to pass one of the most draconian bans on smoking in public places in the world.

When leading journalists die, it's routine to claim that they were "irreplaceable." But Bron Waugh, the most anarchic writer of his generation, truly was irreplaceable, as Charles Moore, his editor at the *Daily Telegraph*, conceded, and his death was good news only for the power-hungry, warmongers, and serial deceivers.

The tenth anniversary of Waugh's death is marked by the publication in Britain of a new anthology of his work, *Kiss Me, Chudleigh: The World According to Auberon Waugh*. But much more ought to be done to honor him. Waugh believed that mankind did not divide "into the rich and poor, the privileged and the unprivileged, the clever and the stupid, the lucky and the unlucky, or even the happy and the unhappy," but into "the nasty and the nice." While keeping our sense of humor intact and not becoming too earnest—Waugh would have hated that—we need to build a left-right alliance against the nasty: to stand up to the control freaks, blow raspberries at the thought police, and ridicule the moral imperialists who wish to interfere in the running of other sovereign nations, most of which have much healthier and happier societies than our own. We must do all we can to turn the clock back to a gentler, less egotistical age. In short, it's time to get the Official Auberon Waugh Appreciation Society fully operational. ■

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America Alone

What ever happened to the “Coalition of the Willing?”

By Ted Galen Carpenter

BRITISH PRIME MINISTER David Cameron recently reassured President Obama that Britain would remain a “robust ally”—America’s wingman—in confronting threats around the world. Of course, that comment might have been a little more comforting if it had not come on the heels of his government’s decision to cut Britain’s already modest defense budget by another 8 percent. Cameron and his colleagues approved that reduction despite Washington’s frantic lobbying.

London’s decision to pare down military spending as part of its strategy to close the government’s huge budget deficit is symptomatic of what’s happening with many of America’s security partners, but Britain’s maneuver was especially painful to hawks in the United States. Even as other allies became less and less willing to follow Washington’s lead on military interventions in recent years, Britain remained doggedly loyal. Indeed, former prime minister Tony Blair endured the label “America’s lap dog” with the proverbial stiff upper lip as the war in Iraq became increasingly unpopular in his country.

And unlike some allies, Britain did more than provide rhetorical support for Washington’s global adventures. It put boots on the ground and planes in the air. Now, though, there are doubts not only whether a British government would assist future U.S.-led interventions, given the negative tenor of domestic opinion, but also whether London would have the troops and hardware to do so even if it wanted to help. It’s as if

the Lone Ranger could no longer count on Tonto—or Don Quixote was being abandoned by Sancho Panza.

American leaders seem to be in denial about what is happening in various allied countries. How clueless Washington has become was apparent when the Obama administration issued its first National Security Strategy document last May. The United States, the NSS stressed, cannot afford to be the world’s sole policeman; it needs partners who are willing and able to meet security challenges.

But Washington will increasingly look in vain for partners who are willing or able, much less both. America’s \$700 billion military budget, which consumes about 5 percent of our gross domestic product, has soared over the past decade. In contrast, allied defense spending has been in free fall. With the new budget, London’s outlays will decline to a mere 2.7 percent of GDP. And Britain is a veritable Sparta compared to other NATO members. Germany’s once credible defense force is now a shrunken husk, with Berlin’s spending down to 1.4 percent of GDP. Such key countries as Italy and Spain skimp even more.

The administration can’t count on newer NATO members to fill that gap. The military efforts of many of those countries are too small even to matter. Such nations as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, and Albania, which joined the alliance in the last two rounds of enlargement, collectively spend less on defense in a year

than the United States spends in Afghanistan in three weeks. Whatever their desires, they are incapable of providing more than token military deployments. That might be useful for political symbolism—Washington can create the illusion that an intervention is multilateral—but such commitments are useless from a military standpoint.

Washington doesn’t have much reason for optimism about help from its East Asian allies either. Japan, by far the most significant friendly power in the region, strictly adheres to spending no more than 1 percent of GDP on the military. South Korea devotes less than 3 percent to defense. And both Tokyo and Seoul are largely concerned about possible security threats from North Korea or China. Neither the governments nor the populace in those countries show much interest in helping the United States in any future nation-building mission in the Middle East or Africa.

Even when allied forces have been deployed in such missions, the results have ranged from frustrating to comical. Japan sent members of its Self-Defense Force to Iraq in 2003, but Tokyo required them to be non-combat personnel. That meant that Japanese forces had to be surrounded and protected by the troops of other countries in the U.S.-led coalition. South Korea sent true combat units, but Seoul insisted that they be stationed only in Iraqi Kurdistan—the northern portion of Iraq that was so peaceful that there were very few incidents, in marked contrast to the chaos that gripped the rest of the country.

Several allied governments have imposed similar restrictions regarding their units in Afghanistan. Berlin, for example, did not allow its troops to be deployed outside of northern Afghanistan, far away from Kandahar and other Taliban-infested portions of the country. That was probably just as well: a 2008 Bundestag investigation found that German troops were so out of shape, in part because of excessive beer consumption, that they would be useless in a combat setting. Unfortu-

delusional. There was initially more support among Europeans for the mission in Afghanistan. Indeed, following the terrorist attacks on 9/11, NATO states for the first time in the history of the alliance invoked Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which proclaims that an attack on one member is considered an attack on all. There was little public opposition to that move, even though it was evident that the United States would take military action against Afghanistan as al-Qaeda's principal base

on, opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq contributed to the electoral ouster of Spain's conservative government and the victory of the opposition Socialists. More recently, dissatisfaction over his support for Washington's wars played a role in the defeat of Australian prime minister John Howard. Tony Blair's reputation as a U.S. foreign policy lackey undermined his political position to the point that he was forced to give up his leadership of the Labour Party and his post as prime minister.

The combination of declining military capabilities and dwindling public support for murky interventions in the Third World means that Washington cannot count on allied participation in future crusades. Even the loyal Brits are blunt on that point. Despite its new, downsized budget, Britain remains something more than a military pushover. It still has a capable navy and air force as well as a small, but potent, nuclear deterrent. That force is adequate to deter aggression against the British homeland and deal with security contingencies in the European theater. But venturing far afield is another matter. Key elements of Cameron's budget reduction included a 10 percent cut in uniformed personnel and whopping slashes in weapons systems, such as artillery, crucial to ground force deployments.

That sends a signal that London does not contemplate participation in more Iraq- or Afghanistan-style missions. In case Washington misunderstood, Prime Minister Cameron stressed that in the future British forces would be deployed "only where key UK national interests are at stake." Ventures to promote democracy at the point of bayonets in the Middle East or Central Asia are unlikely to fit that description.

Instead of complaining about allies' decisions to look after their own interests, Washington should take heed. As

A FREE WORLD ARRAYED AGAINST WHAT? A SOVIET EMPIRE THAT DISAPPEARED TWO DECADES AGO? A MOTLEY COLLECTION OF STATELESS TERRORISTS?

nately for those forces, though, their seemingly safe, comfortable assignment did not entirely turn out that way. Taliban units infiltrated into northern Afghanistan, and German troops, much to their surprise, found themselves under fire.

Other NATO countries placed various requirements on the use of their forces. In some cases, night missions were deemed off-limits. In others, troops could not be deployed at all in situations in which combat was likely. Such limitations drove U.S. military commanders to distraction. But they merely reflected how unpopular U.S.-led counterinsurgency or nation-building missions in faraway lands have become in most allied countries. Opinion polls among NATO members show majorities—usually strong majorities—opposed to having their troops involved in such interventions.

With the partial exception of Britain, the Iraq War was unpopular in those nations from the beginning and became dramatically more so as the original justifications for the invasion proved false and hopes for a smooth transition to a pro-Western, democratic Iraq proved

of operations.

But as the war dragged on and the violence continued to mount with little evidence of positive results, Europeans became more negative. An opinion survey conducted by the German Marshall Fund of the United States and several other think tanks in the summer of 2010 found strong support—some 64 percent—in 11 major European Union countries for withdrawing their troops from Afghanistan, or at least greatly reducing their numbers. In several key countries, including Germany and Poland, majorities favored full withdrawal.

The only way that NATO governments could keep their increasingly restless populations from open rebellion against policies that supported the U.S. war in Afghanistan was to place more rigorous restrictions on the use of their troops. But even that strategy has become noticeably less effective in the past year. Europeans want their forces removed from harm's way, and leaders in democratic political systems ignore such sentiment at their peril.

Allied governments around the world have discovered that the hard way. Early

— OLD AND RIGHT —

usual, American neoconservatives manage to miss the point. Whining about London's more austere defense budget, Council on Foreign Relations writer Max Boot argues that it "means that even more of the burden of defending what used to be called the Free World will fall on our overstretched armed forces."

But they are overstretched only because U.S. leaders have been following the policy prescriptions of Max Boot and his cohorts. Even the notion of a "Free World" reflects obsolete thinking. A Free World arrayed against what? A Soviet empire that disappeared two decades ago? A motley collection of stateless terrorists? Such rhetoric tries to mask the dubious goal of interventions in strategically marginal places for obscure objectives.

Nation-building missions and armed democracy-promotion ventures are not essential to America's security. We do not need, and should not want, any more Iraqs or Afghanistans. More than 5,000 dead Americans and nearly \$2 trillion down the drain ought to deter Washington from pursuing similar schemes in the future.

It was bad enough during the Cold War when the United States appointed itself global policeman, but in recent years our nation has become the world's armed social worker. U.S. leaders will find that to be an increasingly lonely role. Even America's professed allies no longer have the military capabilities or the desire to join us as junior partners. Instead of berating them for a lack of loyalty, we ought to emulate their wisdom and restraint. ■

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BE NOT UNGRATEFUL to the achievements of scientific materialism and to the insights of many pragmatists. In practice you are living every day on the benefits of those achievements and those insights, even if you greet them with an affectation of pseudomedieval scorn. No church is going to rip out its telephones and electric lights because they are a product of scientific materialism. But though gratitude is overdue, enough is enough. Civilization depends today on conserving, against the nihilistic brand of scientific relativism [the] principle of a central common law. It alone protects all against the centrifugal special laws of class ego, nation ego, and individual ego.

Powerful psychological safeguards are needed to prop up common law at a time of toppling values. But not all safeguards are compatible with the human dignity that alone justifies their use. The safeguard most compatible with human dignity is not external brute force but a deeply entrenched inner check.

The most effective, most automatic way to enforce the ethical check is to formalize and institutionalize it, even at the painful but unavoidable price of sacrificing a certain amount of inspiration to institution. Some of the spirit must always be sacrificed to some of the letter of the law. The price must be paid. Whether grudgingly or with eager faith, you can never get around paying it—unless you take the anarchist position that civilization does not depend on organized society but can survive with no more framework than the natural goodness of man.

Because every human being is a cave man by nature, capable of every insanity and atrocity, you must prefer art and artifice, classicism and formalized social convention, to the cults of natural goodness, progressive education, and instinctive self-expression. For the same reason you must prefer the "conservatism" symbolized by the pruned and patterned gardens of Versailles to the "anarchism" symbolized by the romantic barbarous jungle. But if you can disprove this view of social stability, then you are entitled to be a philosophical anarchist. An idealistic pacifist anarchism (Thoreau, Kropotkin, Gandhi, George Orwell), rather than liberalism or socialism, would be the most logical and most attractive alternative to conservatism, in case the latter's pessimistic premises about human nature were proved wrong.

To make people live the ethical check instead of only theoritizing it, the best sanction is the community's experience of having lived it for centuries, the feeling of it "always" being so and being there: just as "so" and just as "there" as the sky and earth that form the roof and stage of the innately ethical drama of man. Whether your source for your ethical code is natural or supernatural or that blurred borderline to which both science and religion tend, only this conservative experience of communal tradition will turn it from abstraction to a way of life.

Liberals favor universal suffrage horizontally in time. Conservatives favor it also vertically. If you have become convinced that freedom depends on the unbroken continuity of communal ethical tradition, then you must give the vote also to your ancestors.

—Peter Viereck, *Shame and Glory of the Intellectuals*, 1953

Bernanke's Bad Bet

The Fed sacrifices Main Street's wealth to Wall Street.

By Charles Hugh Smith

WOULD YOU CALL sacrificing \$6 trillion of America's household wealth to inflate the stock market by \$2 trillion a good deal? Few would, but the Federal Reserve obviously thinks it's a bargain, for this tradeoff is the explicit result of the central bank's latest round of quantitative easing, the grandly named QE2.

From the time Fed officials began outlining QE2 in June—a plan to buy \$600 billion in U.S. Treasury bonds and inject that stupendous sum into the banking sector—the U.S. dollar plummeted by 15 percent. (It has since recovered a little.)

The mainstream financial media studiously ignored the downside of this beggaring of the dollar. The \$43 trillion worth of non-stock assets held by U.S. households—real estate, bonds, cash deposits—are denominated in dollars, so a 15 percent depreciation in the currency knocked about \$6 trillion off the purchasing power of those assets.

Given that the Fed's zero-interest rate policy (ZIRP) has lowered the yield on cash to almost zero—earn a big 1/10th of 1 percent on your cash—the predictable result of the latest easing was a mad rush into risk assets such as precious metals, commodities, and stocks, which jumped 19 percent from June to early November.

That was the intent, as Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke recently made clear: “Higher stock prices will boost consumer wealth and help increase confidence, which can also spur spending [that] will lead to higher incomes and profits that, in a virtuous circle, will further support economic expansion.”

In other words, the Fed threw the dollar into the shredder in an attempt to

create a stock-market wealth effect that assumes consumers who see their portfolios rising will borrow and spend more, igniting the moribund U.S. economy.

What QE2 has already sparked is not growth but skyrocketing agricultural commodities prices. Though Chairman Bernanke has claimed QE2 won't cause inflation, the average bloke can see that a 70 percent increase in the cost of wheat will end up raising the price of bread. Paying more for essentials while household incomes stagnate is a recipe for impoverishment, not growth.

There is a more than a whiff of desperation in this stock market wealth-effect gambit, and that says volumes about the fundamental flaws in the Fed's policies. Why would the Federal Reserve make such a risky bet? Is making such bets really the central bank's job?

The Federal Reserve's mandate is limited to “maintaining monetary and credit aggregates commensurate with the economy's potential to increase production, so as to promote the goals of maximum employment, stable prices, and moderate long-term interest rates.” In plain English, the Fed is supposed to manage the nation's supply of money and credit, not its economy or stock market. Yet the latter is precisely what the Fed is trying to do by boosting the stock market to engineer a wealth effect.

There are two fatal errors in this policy: one is a fundamental misunderstanding of capitalism, and the other is a misunderstanding of the stock market.

In a capitalist business cycle, “animal spirits” reach euphoric heights in a strongly expanding economy, and even-

tually people borrow a lot of money to speculate on future growth: betting, in effect, that trees will grow to the sky.

At the peak, too much credit is extended, too much money is borrowed, too much capacity is built, and too many speculative bets are placed. In the inevitable cooling of the economy that follows rapid expansion, the overleveraged find they cannot service their debt or roll it over into new loans, and an overhang of buildings and capacity cannot be rented or sold for a profit.

In this phase of the business cycle, the overleveraged and over-indebted go belly up, and lenders and investors take losses as empty buildings and factories are sold for pennies on the dollar. Balance sheets are cleaned up as assets are liquidated and uncollectible debts are written off. The Federal Reserve's role in this contraction-of-credit phase is to provide sufficient liquidity for qualified borrowers to roll over their debt into new loans and for new buyers to purchase distressed assets.

This contraction phase is the process of capitalism known as creative destruction, and it is the essential foundation for future growth. Malinvested money is lost, risky speculations go bust, and patient capital eventually ends up owning the distressed assets. The process is painful in the short term. But the sooner the bad debt is cleared and the overcapacity shuttered or sold off, the sooner new enterprises and sound credit can expand.

Sometime after the deep 1981-82 recession, Fed policymakers decided to revoke the painful part of the business cycle and maintain only the happy part of

expanding credit, rising speculation, and endless construction.

So when the excesses of the dot-com era led to an inevitable business-cycle contraction—*i.e.*, a recession—in late 2000, the Greenspan-led Federal Reserve responded by dropping interest rates to near zero and keeping them low for years. Coupled with monetary easing measures, this led not to a contraction of debt and speculation but to a massive increase in credit throughout every sector of the economy—especially real estate, with home mortgages rising from \$5 trillion in the late 1990s to \$7.8 trillion in 2004 and \$10.5 trillion by 2006. Corporate debt leaped by over \$3 trillion from 2004 to 2008, and non-corporate business debt jumped up by \$2 trillion.

The Fed's plan to repeal the business cycle by flooding the economy with cheap, easy-to-borrow money succeeded for a time, but increasing borrowing, speculation, and overbuilding did not cancel the business cycle—it only ensured that the eventual popping of the credit bubble would be more devastating.

After denying that housing was in a credit-fueled bubble, Chairman Bernanke finally acted as the global financial meltdown gathered force in late 2008. His plan was a retread of the Greenspan policy: drop interest rates to near zero and flood the banking sector with fresh credit. But an unforeseen snag occurred in the Fed's plan to spark more borrowing and spending: households had just seen \$15 trillion of their net worth wiped out in the meltdown, and they no longer had the collateral or the desire to borrow more.

Policymakers chose not to enforce a capitalist liquidation of uncollectible debt and malinvestment in the financial/banking sector, but to “extend and pretend” the sector's insolvency in the hope that assets such as real estate would climb back up in value and relieve the sector from the pain of business-cycle losses.

Alas, house values are still falling in the majority of markets, and the Fed's strategy has failed to incite either significant writedowns in bad debt or the expansion of new borrowing. Total household debt has dropped by a meager \$50 billion, from \$14.4 trillion to \$13.9 trillion, with home mortgages accounting for a tiny \$35 billion of that reduction.

In other words, with no liquidation of impaired debt and no real liquidation of malinvestment, households and banks are sagging under the load of too much debt. Few households are qualified to borrow more, and fewer still desire higher debt loads.

By attempting to repeal the business cycle with ever-larger injections of liquidity and credit, the Fed has sought to revoke capitalism itself. The failure of its grand plan was thus guaranteed from the start.

Enter the Fed's last desperate gamble: that a rising stock market would serve as a public-relations proxy for the real economy and that a rise in household stock portfolios would trigger the wealth effect—that is, the wealth created by a temporarily rising stock market would prompt consumers to start borrowing and spending freely.

But there is no evidence that a rising stock market actually leads to increased household income. On the contrary, the S&P 500 rose in the sharpest rally in a century last year, up 54 percent from March 2009 to September 2009, yet household income declined in 2009.

If a rising market doesn't actually increase incomes, it might increase “animal spirits,” the magic elixir of desperate economists. But the Fed apparently neglected the fact that stock ownership is highly concentrated in the U.S.: a mere 5 percent of households own 72 percent of the nation's financial wealth, and the top 10 percent own 83 percent.

The Fed is betting on a narrow variant of the discredited trickle-down theory of

wealth distribution, in which the top 10 percent of households would see their stock portfolios rise and then embark on a frenzy of consumption that would somehow trickle down to the bottom 90 percent who saw little direct impact of rising stocks.

In expanding its mandate from controlling the money supply to controlling the economy, the Fed has turned to the only intervention it has left: pumping up the stock market. But the public has experienced two catastrophic stock market meltdowns in less than a decade: the dot-com aftermath that saw the NASDAQ lose almost 80 percent of its value and the 2008 global crisis that slashed 45 percent off the S&P 500. They are wary of the ephemeral gains in stocks, and weary of the strains of overindebtedness. Individual investors responded to the Fed's massive intervention on behalf of the stock market by pulling money out of stock mutual funds for 24 straight weeks.

Rather than increase household wealth, Bernanke's QE has shaved \$6 trillion from the purchasing power of household assets and unleashed a flood of higher commodity prices that will further impoverish American households. And rather than “promote economic growth,” as the Chairman recently claimed, his unprecedented campaign of intervention has depreciated their wealth and future incomes. For this vast reduction in wealth and purchasing power, the Fed offers a rise in the stock market, which only benefits Wall Street and the top tranche of American households—the slice least in need of stimulus.

It was a bet with no factual evidence that success was even possible, much less likely, and a bet the Fed was never empowered to make. ■

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Swamps of Academe

Russell Kirk ran the sword of imagination through the educational establishment.

By John Willson

IT SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISING that a man who spent much of his life up to age 34 hanging around schools should retain a keen interest in them. Russell Kirk abandoned the professoriate early on, but a major source of his income came from speaking at colleges and universities. His fortnightly column for *National Review*, "From the Academy," was about education, and in 1960 he started an avocational journal, the *University Bookman*, to "publish short articles on higher education, and fairly lengthy reviews of select college textbooks."

He liked to quote sociologist Ernest van den Haag to the effect that both students and teachers had succumbed to "America's Pelagian heresy." "Old Pelagius, so drubbed by Saint Augustine, declared that all men will be saved eventually, without the operation of divine grace," Kirk writes in his autobiography, *The Sword of Imagination*. "The average American in our century has come to believe that all men may be saved through educationism, without need for thought."

"What was once academic community," he sadly concludes, "had become academic collectivism." American education is mired in the "Serbonian Bog."

Kirk loved such tropes. It delighted him to turn "Old Pelagius" into a cypher for American educational folly—"Deweyism," he also called it—or to recall the bog near the ancient Egyptian Lake Serbonis that was said to have swallowed whole armies. If you wade along the edge of the educational bog, he once wrote, "you weep when you don't sleep." But much as he lamented American education having been turned over

to the "Dismal Swamp Teachers' College," he also insisted, with Walter Bagehot, that "conservatism is enjoyment."

The Serbonian Bog consisted in those institutions that swallow up intellect, morality, imagination, sound learning, beauty, humor, good books, true diversity, religion, academic freedom, wise teachers, and lively students. Kirk's columns almost never treated these as abstractions. In fact, he could be wickedly particular. He came to think of Michigan State, which he attended when it was "Michigan's udder university" and at which he taught for a few years, as "Behemoth U," the very definition of a university concerned more with vocationalism, mass education for the elusive goal of equality, and runaway scale than with anything that could be thought of as human or humane.

John Hannah, who presided over MSU's great growth, was to Kirk a "chickenologist"—his degree was in poultry science—and Kirk chuckled when it was said that "the concrete never sets on John Hannah's empire." Dr. Milton Eisenhower at Penn State got little better treatment. They were the "university imperialists." Such men and schools sucked up moral and intellectual energy, and Kirk saw them everywhere. In 1968 alone he visited almost 150 campuses.

Second only to Behemoth was the textbook monster, which he gave a special place in the Serbonian Bog. If Kirk devoted 50 or so of his "From the Academy" columns to Behemoth, he wrote perhaps as much and ten times more in the *University Bookman* on textbooks, criticizing them and their authors for

their "bleak Deweyism," their servile attitudes to political authority, and their failure to waken the minds of our students.

"Textbook writing and publishing," he said, "have become a species of racket." It's interesting, though, that this man of letters would keep mining the textbook ore, seeking good veins, rarely finding them, but insisting to his readers that somebody had to do it. The ideologue dismisses the whole enterprise; the conservative keeps encouraging teachers and parents to find continuity with a better reading past. Russell Kirk was virtually a one-man front in this battle. The Left was marching through the institutions; most of the Right hurled thunderbolts but didn't read and review the books.

Third in the bog was the educationist establishment. The Deweyite Pelagians beckoned would-be teachers to Serbonis. Kirk cataloged their "involuntary servitude": departments of education ("I think we would do well to abolish Education as a separate department or school"), certification, accreditation, unions, "in-service training," consolidation of schools, federal aid (which, Kirk was among the first to see, meant federal control), mandatory sex education, uniform civics courses, and politically correct textbooks.

"No doubt these schemes are progressive," he said. "But toward what do we progress?" To the mantra, "You can't go back to the Little Red School House," Kirk replied, "Why not?" Absent all these collectivist schemes, he insisted that the little schools, and particularly "our American liberal arts colleges ... have long done an incalculably valuable work in keeping alive among us the traditions

of civility and a respect for the wisdom of our ancestors.”

The “Teachers College patronage system” threatened the good, the true, and the beautiful at every level of education. “I am suggesting,” Kirk said, “that a vague desire to adjust to perpetual change ... may be making intelligent change, or decent preservation of our existing civilization, almost impossible.”

The burden of both “From the Academy” and the *University Bookman* was critical of current educational practices and ideas, mostly because so much of the academy at every level was controlled by the “clutch of ideology.” “The ideologues are a minority in the academy,” he wrote in 1964, “but they are a shabby crew.”

He said frequently, however, that “cheerfulness keeps breaking in.” He found hope in a wide variety of colleges: conservative societies in the Ivies, the humane scale at Santa Cruz in the California system, independence at Hillsdale, high standards at Wesleyan, admirable academic freedom at the New School, a sense of moral renewal at several Catholic colleges, intellectual achievement at Brooklyn College. He admired fraternities because they arose to defend the “whole concept of free community,” which was “the most fundamental of social instincts.” True diversity still existed.

Kirk also found that although religion (instruction in which he considered a “natural right”) was on the run in public schools, educationists had fallen under the spell of Freud and Marx, and “values” were replacing true authority, the powers of the imagination were hard to kill. “Montessori is no fad,” he said. “Aye, Maria Montessori understood the imagination of children and their creative powers.” Because she was a devout Catholic, and because she realized, almost by revelation, that the world of the child is the world of wonder, she laid

out a path of hope that stays mostly outside the educationist bog. “If every child could be touched by her spirit,” said Kirk, “we would make speedy headway against our present discontents.”

Like Chesterton and Eliot, he knew from a very young age that the “moral imagination,” which makes us truly human, requires that we think and express ourselves in metaphors and parables. He knew this because he was given good things to read: Scott, Cooper, Dickens, Twain. Whittaker Chambers said that reading *Les Misérables* literally saved his life after he had descended into the diabolical worlds of communism and homosexuality. In Russell’s case, good things to read fortified him against the diabolical.

When he got long uninterrupted chances to read, on the Salt Flats of Utah as an Army conscript in World War II and as a student of literature and history at St. Andrews, he added the politics and philosophy and theology that by his early thirties armed him for intellectual battle and eventually led him back to the Christian God and the Catholic Church. He prepared his interior life so that he could speak with authority about the common life.

Historian George Nash, in his brilliant talk “The Life and Legacy of Russell Kirk,” said that “it is hinted that Kirk is slowly becoming a forgotten figure” and he “has come to be a figure more admired than studied.” Kirk’s critics seem to want him buried deep, the progressives because he so thoroughly exposed the fact that they had no clothes, and a pretty big chunk of the Right because he so rarely gave in to mere politics. (He took the long view and insisted that not politics but morality is in the heart of man.) Others on the Right think him too optimistic about the American enterprise.

To all of whom I offer this summary of a remarkable Sept. 8, 1956 column. Kirk tells the story of a young English poet

invited to speak to the student/faculty assembly of a Midwestern teachers college. He suffers through a long and irrelevant introduction, then proceeds to read to the assembly his new translation of “Antigone.” The culture of the institution bodes ill for his effort: it is usually the case that such events bore the faculty and excite the students to rudeness. “Well,” says Kirk, “nine hundred students and staff-members turned out for the occasion; and they all sat rapt all through the poet’s reading.”

The power of Sophocles’ play overwhelmed the educationist setting. The students stood in applause. The college’s president and most of the faculty were astonished—and bewildered. They could only assume that the faculty member who organized the event had delivered dire threats to the students or promises of great rewards for good behavior. I have seen comparable events in a long career in teaching. It is indeed a curious and moving sight.

Kirk draws a “humble moral”:

There is, I think, an enduring human nature, common to the Greeks of the fifth century, the English of the sixteenth century, and to us. Some qualities of that nature even the worst system of formal education has difficulties in repressing. ... Despite all the muddled secular indoctrination in positivism and pragmatism and progressivism to which the unfortunate inmates of our teachers’ colleges usually are subjected, truth will get a hearing now and then; the ancient hungers of the imagination are hard to deny.

Who do we have with us today to make such connections? Who to see the realities of our heresies and bogs, yet sense the triumph of the human spirit? ■

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Arts & Letters

BOOKS

[*The American Way of War: How Bush's Wars Became Obama's*, Tom Engelhardt, Haymarket Books, 269 pages]

Evil Empire

By Brad Birzer

ON NOV. 9, 1989 a number of students crowded into a tight dormitory room, one of the few with a TV, in Zahm Hall at the University of Notre Dame. They had gathered to watch history unfold, as thousands of East and West Germans came together armed with sledgehammers, hope, and joy to tear down the Berlin Wall, skipping, sliding, and shimmering across the top of that concrete monstrosity. Only eight years before, President Reagan, under the watchful eye of Our Lady of the Lake atop her Golden Dome, had stood a few buildings down from Zahm and identified communism as “some bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages are even now being written.” The prophecy was coming true, right there on the screen.

Since the early 1960s, Ronald Reagan had been planning an end to the Cold War in what might only be described as the equivalent of a mixture of fantasy baseball and the board game Risk. He stated his aim openly throughout his two terms as president, but predictably few believed him. The kind dismissed

his words as simple optimism from a lovable actor. The cynical—including those who helped shape public opinion—dismissed Reagan’s words as misguided, destabilizing, idiotic, colored by too many White House screenings of “Star Wars.”

But even after Reagan’s vision was fulfilled, the Cold War did not end. The events of 1989 should have offered the West some breathing room, a time to rethink the purpose of our nation and reinvigorate republican ideals. Instead, the past two decades, under Republican and Democratic administrations alike, have revealed America and the West as morally and spiritually bankrupt. Plunder and torture best symbolize the bloated American Empire of the last 20 years, a force that exists merely for the sake of self-perpetuation. Our standing in the world has declined precipitously. At home, many are angry and want to change, organize, and harangue. Despite their best intentions, they stand impotent, comprehending neither the past nor the present, looking at the future—when not navel-gazing—with understandable dread.

When voters elected Barack Obama in 2008, his supporters acclaimed him higher than a prophet; he was messianic. As one fine and intelligent person—an expert in high tech as well as a farmer—wrote to me in immediate post-election euphoria, “Brad, why are you so upset, don’t you realize that we finally have a chance to end war and poverty, permanently?”

What the Obama administration has delivered, of course, is not only the continuation of the policies of the previous

three administrations but a profound exaggeration of them. If anything, we suffer more violations of our privacy and civil liberties now than at any time during the Bush administration, all in the name of a national-security state that keeps the populace in its place while perpetuating war abroad.

In his soul-searching, illuminating, and often depressing look at the unholy *ménage* of Demos, Leviathan, and Mars, Tom Englehardt probes deeply into the war culture of Washington, D.C. He notes that only two positions have any real voice in contemporary public-policy debate: those who want more of this and those who want more of that. The key word is “more.” As Englehardt writes, when it comes to conflict overseas “however contentious the disputes in Washington, however dismally the public viewed the war, however much the president’s war coalition might threaten to crack open, the only choices were between more and more.” More drones, more troops, more nation-building.

So much for campaign promises and the new messiah who would end war and poverty permanently. The first military budget Obama submitted, Engelhardt notes, was larger than the last one tendered by the Bush administration. “Because the United States does not look like a militarized country, it’s hard for Americans to grasp that Washington is a war capital, that the United States is a war state, that it garrisons much of the planet, and that the norm for us is to be at war somewhere (usually, in fact, many places) at any moment.”

Further, as the *Washington Post* revealed this past summer in a penetrat-

ing series on the intelligence community, no one knows exactly how many persons in how many agencies are spending what levels of taxpayer dollars to keep the espionage machine running. Engelhardt argues the intelligence communities are as bloated as any part of the Department of Defense. (Too bad we don't still call it the Department of War, which would be far more honest.)

As further evidence of our degeneration into a martial empire, the U.S. sells 70 percent of the weapons in the international arms trade. In almost every way, Engelhardt contends, the United States precipitates the militarization of the globe.

How far and fast we've fallen since the relatively peaceful days of the Reagan era. Four interventionist administrations later, we find ourselves as the leaders of international vice and terror. What happened, Engelhardt asks, to the republic our Founders bequeathed to us? What have we done with and to our inheritance?

In the background, I can hear Steve Horgarth's wonderfully English voice from the film "Brave": "The Cold War's gone, but those bastards will find us another one. They're here to protect you, don't you know. Get used to it." He was right.

WE FIND OURSELVES AS THE LEADERS OF INTERNATIONAL VICE AND TERROR.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE REPUBLIC OUR FOUNDERS BEQUEATHED TO US?

The bastards have placed barbed wire, barricades, cameras, and uniformed persons throughout the once republican capital of the United States, Washington, D.C. Those bastards control the levers of power throughout the country, not just inside the Beltway. They just made my wife and I remove our shoes and belts and hand over to the federal government any bottles of liquids with three ounces or more. The bastards are everywhere. And it seems America isn't enough for them: avarice begets avarice.

With an excellent mind and an equally fine pen, Engelhardt demonstrates true patriotism to the America founding and to the larger humane and irenic ideals of the West:

What a world might be like in which we began not just to withdraw our troops from one war to fight another, but to seriously scale down the American global mission, close those hundreds of bases—as of 2010, there were almost 400 of them, macro to micro, in Afghanistan alone—and bring our military home is beyond imagining. To discuss such obviously absurd possibilities makes you an apostate to America's true religion and addiction, which is force. However much it might seem that most of us are peaceably watching our TV sets or computer screens or iPhones, we Americans are also—always—marching to war. We may not all bother to attend the church of our new religion, but we all tithe. We all partake. In a sense we live peaceably in a state of war.

Reading such good prose invigorates like little else in this world of sorrows. But one should not consider Engelhardt merely a writer of golden prose. This

body has a soul as well, and Engelhardt convincingly presents evidence as well as argument throughout the book.

In the first chapter, he shows how the George W. Bush administration went from nothing to everything, how 9/11 "called" Bush to lead a crusade and to give his presidency drive, and perhaps most importantly how the country came to be transformed into a "homeland." Next, Engelhardt considers how to garbison a planet: "Imagine the hubris involved in the idea of being 'global policemen' or 'sheriff' and marching into

a Dodge City that was nothing less than Planet Earth itself." American bureaucrats, diplomats, and army engineers swarmed the globe, remaking a post-Cold War world into post-post-Cold War one. "Naturally, with a whole passel of bad guys out there, a 'global swamp' to be 'drained,' we armed ourselves to kill, not stun."

The American Way of War is brimming with insights. Engelhardt develops the fascinating argument that the history of the past 11 decades is the history of the airplane and our use of it for war, from the Sopwith Camel to the drone piloted remotely out of Las Vegas. In rather Chomsky-like (or perhaps Orwellian) fashion, one of Engelhardt's later chapters explores the perversion of words in the English language to make the idea of war more palatable for the public and keep perpetual conflict "hidden in plain sight." Engelhardt claims the Bush administration redefined patriotism and American identity, polarizing the country. Anyone who challenged the war, the Bush line went, must either be a "wuss" or a traitor.

In great detail, the author shows the continuity of thought from Clinton to Obama, revealing, not surprisingly, that the current president controls, possesses, and wields the greatest amount of power—in terms of military, real estate, and budget—anywhere or anytime. Never did Obama plan to follow through with his peace promises made during the 2008 campaign.

Too often, Engelhardt sagaciously concludes, Americans spend their time in a future that cannot possibly be known, imagining their country's role as savior and messiah. But Engelhardt notes that only the past can reveal our true selves. "Not even Americans can occupy the future," he writes. "It belongs to no one."

Not even to the bastards. ■

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[*History Man: The Life of R.G. Collingwood*, Fred Inglis, Princeton University Press, 386 pages]

Biographer or Ventriloquist?

By James Bowman

IN WRITING HIS BIOGRAPHY of the underappreciated and now mostly forgotten British philosopher R.G. Collingwood, Fred Inglis unfortunately did not obtain the cooperation of his subject's surviving daughter, Teresa, who like her father has become a don at Oxford. Collingwood, who died in 1943 at the age of only 53, is said to have left behind a large archive of letters, which Teresa refused to make available to Inglis. Doubtless that is part of the reason why this book is so short of what would conventionally be considered essential biographical detail. For example, we are left knowing almost nothing about the woman to whom Collingwood was married for 23 years and whom he divorced shortly before his death to marry an actress and former student—or, for that matter, about the actress either.

You'd think that Inglis, a professor emeritus of Cultural Studies at the University of Sheffield, could have done a bit more digging. Somehow he even neglects to tell us the date of Collingwood's birth. Perhaps he excludes it on principle: describing the postwar, post-Collingwood philosophical landscape in Britain, the biographer writes that "Ryle and Wittgenstein had demolished the long-lived psychology of Romanticism whereby human beings are divided into inner states and outer appearances and in which the key to understanding other people is to discover how they truly think and feel about the world." If adopted as a working principle by writers of biographies, this is very bad news for readers.

As an admirer of Collingwood's philosophical writings, especially his works

on history collected after his death in *The Idea of History*, I was glad to find Inglis's book so sympathetic to its subject, and I hope that it sparks a revival of interest in the great man's thinking. But I have to say that in his daughter's place I would not have cooperated with Inglis either. *History Man* is not only badly short of essential information but also terribly overwritten. This is a very un-Collingwoodian volume in several ways, especially in its failure to stick to the evidence and its greater interest in claiming that the philosopher's thought was a cruder prototype of its author's own than in trying to understand what Collingwood actually did think.

Collingwood's greatness as a philosopher was to demonstrate the centrality of history to all thought—and, as he showed, "all history is the history of thought"—together with the idea of "absolute presuppositions," which are largely invisible to those who hold them but increasingly apparent to subsequent generations who don't make the same assumptions. These presuppositions form our thought and, once revealed, compel us to keep re-writing the history of it. The cultural milieu of the years since his death has been characterized by absolute presuppositions that include a politically motivated attempt to cut us off from history, the study of which has lately been devoted to passing judgment on the past rather than understanding it, as Collingwood would have required.

To see the inadequacies of Inglis's book, one has only to read it in tandem with Collingwood's *Autobiography*, a classic of 20th-century literature in English. The crispness, clarity, and narrative energy with which it is written is a standing reproach to the misty moralizing that Inglis spends his time superimposing upon the story he has to tell. Here, for instance, is just one of the *Autobiography's* many thrilling passages, set in Collingwood's father's library where

one day when I was eight years old
curiosity moved me to take down a
little black book lettered on its

spine 'Kant's Theory of Ethics.' It was Abbott's translation of the *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*; and as I began reading it, my small form wedged between the bookcase and the table, I was attacked by a strange succession of emotions. First came an intense excitement. I felt that things of the highest importance were being said about matters of the utmost urgency: things which at all costs I must understand. Then, with a wave of indignation, came the discovery that I could not understand them. ... Then, third and last, came the strangest emotion of all. I felt that the contents of this book, although I could not understand it, were somehow my business: a matter personal to myself, or rather to some future self of my own. ... I felt as if a veil had been lifted and my destiny revealed.

He goes on to describe in similarly perspicuous language the urgent need for reflection that this early encounter with his life's work inspired in him and his escapes into the Wordsworthian landscapes of his Lake District boyhood to indulge that need, which began to make his parents think that "I had fallen into a habit of loafing"—a part of the story that his biographer reduces to paraphrase as follows:

The happy, venturesome little boy was at the same time strikingly removed on occasions from the intent and boisterous family, pursuing thoughts that he could not yet clothe in words, but knowing them to be irresistible, thrilling also, summoning him from across a vast landscape of the mind to the long exploration at the end of which he would find them, the deep forests and dark hills would fall back, and he would be in a sunlit clearing and at peace.

The reader can't help feeling that he is being invited to admire Inglis's muddily poetical translation of the plainer but

more exciting and intelligible original—to which the biographer has added unwarranted speculation about what the child was “knowing” and feeling.

This impulse to translate often leads him into unprofitable avenues. In describing Collingwood’s career at Rugby School in the first decade of the last century, Inglis can’t resist taking the occasion to reargue the case against the public (that is, private) schools, which was an obsession of the British Left in the 1960s and 1970s. There’s another absolute presupposition that even most of the Labour Party has moved on from. But having grudgingly admitted that Rugby a century ago might have been, against its own interest, a force for progressivism, Inglis goes on to criticize the Labour governments of the 1970s, 30 years after Collingwood’s death, for not abolishing private education. Leaving biography behind, Inglis laments, “a few anxious leftists of the privileged classes sent their children to local state schools in the name of both communal membership and egalitarianism, and they were much accused by others of the well-off classes of sacrificing their children to their principles, as though one could ever do anything else.”

I guess this is an attempt at profundity, but it strikes me as a remarkably stupid statement—and therefore un-Collingwoodian too. The “else” that one could do is to get better principles that don’t require one to sacrifice one’s children to them. But having taken the bit between his teeth, Inglis goes on to further animadversions against the independent schools and their allegedly “bland indifference to human misery” as a prelude to assailing, as one might have known he would, “the great she-rhino” (as Collingwood’s student Denis Healey called her), Margaret Thatcher. Today’s Oxford, by contrast, meets with his approval because it “bears witness to the fact that here at least the community of learning has lost its ancient and horrible racism, has admitted the two genders with a now full heart (and lost its institutional and pubescent horror of sex as well).”

Insofar as this has anything to do with Collingwood, we are meant to understand that he would, as the politicians say, “approve this message,” but I very much doubt that. On the contrary, Inglis’s condescension to other views typical of Collingwood’s time, views that we know Collingwood held—for instance, his Christian faith, even then rare in a philosopher, and his apologia for British and Roman imperialism—do not inspire us with confidence that the biographer has divined correctly what would have been his subject’s views on matters he expressed no opinion about in his lifetime but that interest ageing British lefties today. It all amounts to a very un-Collingwoodian snobbery toward the past on account of its failure to be as liberal and progressive as the author expects it to be.

Inglis’s purpose seems to be to limn his subject in outlines he would prefer Collingwood to have, rather than those that he was actually likely to have had. This is exactly the mistake made by the pre-war realist philosophers whom Collingwood, as he tells us in the *Autobiography*, formed his own philosophy by debunking. Of G.E. Moore’s purported refutation of Berkeleyan idealism and John Cook Wilson’s attacks on F.H. Bradley, Collingwood made the same criticism: that neither man had faithfully represented the views that he claimed to be confronting. Consequently, when he became an Oxford lecturer himself, the first thing Collingwood taught his pupils was “that they must never accept any criticism of anybody’s philosophy which they might hear or read without satisfying themselves by first-hand study that this was the philosophy he actually expounded.” This turns out to be advice as good for biographers seeking an opportunity for ventriloquial social criticism as it is for philosophers. ■

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[Nullification: How to Resist Federal Tyranny in the 21st Century, Thomas E. Woods Jr., Regnery, 309 pages]

Know Your States’ Rights

By Jeff Taylor

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN the referee in a ballgame is a member of one of the competing teams? What if this ref is imbued with overweening confidence in his side’s natural superiority, and he’s so sure of his own sense of fair play that any questioning of his calls is deemed illegitimate? Meet the United States federal judiciary.

Self-righteousness and concentrated power are a dangerous combination. Their conjunction in American politics can be traced to the rulings of Chief Justice John Marshall, an arch-Federalist who shared Alexander Hamilton’s belief in political centralization. The federalist cause from which their party took its name was a distinct move away from the decentralism of the Articles of Confederation, but its advocates insisted that federalism did not mean a consolidated, unitary government of the sort favored by kings and despots. The U.S. Constitution and federal legislation would be the highest law of the land, according to the Supremacy Clause. But traditional rights and responsibilities would be reserved to the state governments and to the people themselves. This principle was enshrined in the Tenth Amendment.

The balance between the Supremacy Clause and the Tenth Amendment was maintained while each level of government stuck to its constitutionally proper areas of concern. But gradually federal power intruded into areas formally—and formerly—reserved to the states. Beginning with the Marshall court in the early 19th century, with its invention of the power of judicial review and its creative use of constitutional loopholes, the

federal judiciary facilitated this growing imbalance. The Supreme Court's bias should have been no surprise since it belonged to one of the competing levels of government. Once the federal judiciary decided to begin ruling in favor of its own team, there was no official mechanism that could stop the concentration of power in D.C.

ONCE THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY DECIDED TO BEGIN RULING IN FAVOR OF ITS OWN TEAM, THERE WAS **NO OFFICIAL MECHANISM** THAT COULD STOP THE **CONCENTRATION OF POWER IN D.C.**

This is where Thomas Woods Jr. comes in. His new book shines much-needed light on the doctrine of nullification. Long marginalized an instrument of the racist, neo-Confederate fringe, today when the idea of states' rights makes news it is more likely than not in connection with the burgeoning Tea Party phenomenon. But a political movement held together more by a common enemy than by a shared platform might not be the best vehicle for the restoration of constitutional balance. Woods's book may help spark a wider, better-informed, and less partisan movement on behalf of states' rights.

Nullification, also known as interposition, is simply the repudiation or ignoring of a federal law by a state government. Rooted in an honorable tradition, it can be a powerful tool for the people and a means of curbing centralized power. In recent decades, the first organized effort to nullify federal laws came from the Left and the libertarian Right in the form of medical-marijuana initiatives. What began in California in 1996 with Proposition 215 has spread, with more states attempting to legalize cannabis for medicinal and recreational use. In the past few years, constitutional conservatives have also used nullification to protect Second Amendment rights and to block the Real ID Act of 2005. Most recently, there have been state efforts to overturn or opt out of Obamacare.

This is the subject matter expertly covered by Woods. Half of his book consists of primary sources: 11 essential documents plus the Constitution itself. The evidence Woods collects is taken from a 60-year span of American history, the pre-Leviathan period before the Civil War, Progressive era, New Deal, Cold War, and Great Society entombed states'

rights seemingly forever. Woods has performed a public service by assembling important but largely forgotten documents in one convenient location. Here you will find the text and explication of the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798-99, New England's nullifying response to Jefferson's Embargo Act, the South's dispute with Jackson over tariff policy, and Wisconsin's rejection of the Fugitive Slave Act.

Nullification is a brief book in terms of original authorial content, but what's here is wonderful. Woods is a scholar, yet his writing style is accessible, with just the right amount of punch. He sets forth the case for nullification with logic and nuance but in a conversational tone.

Woods succinctly summarizes the reasoning behind interposition:

Nullification begins with the axiomatic point that a federal law that violates the Constitution is no law at all. It is void and of no effect. Nullification simply pushes this uncontroversial point a step further: if a law is unconstitutional and therefore void and of no effect, it is up to the states, the parties to the federal compact, to declare it so and thus refuse to enforce it. It would be foolish and vain to wait for the federal government or a branch thereof to condemn its own law. Nullification provides a shield between the

people of a state and an unconstitutional law from the federal government. The central point behind nullification is that the federal government cannot be permitted to hold a monopoly on constitutional interpretation. If the federal government has the exclusive right to judge the extent of its own powers, warned James Madison and Thomas Jefferson in 1798, it will continue to grow—regardless of elections, the separation of powers, and other much-touted limits on government power.

Nullification spends some time on each of the three big constitutional loopholes used by the feds to enlarge their scope of power since the 1810s: the general welfare clause, commerce clause, and necessary and proper clause. The neglected Tenth Amendment is explained, as are the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of Madison and Jefferson. It was these state resolutions, secretly penned by two of our most illustrious founding statesmen, that first presented nullification as a remedy for federal usurpation of state power and the suppression of constitutionally protected individual freedoms. The Principles of '98 played a role throughout the first six decades of the 19th century, invoked by Federalists, Democrats, Whigs, and Republicans for a variety of reasons.

John C. Calhoun's famed advocacy of nullification, in defense of South Carolina's right to reject high federal tariffs, is also examined by Woods. Less well known, but closer to the heart of the Jeffersonian tradition, was the use of nullification by abolitionists in Wisconsin and other northern states to help runaway slaves. The ability of a state to defy federal authority was a tool not only of slaveowners but also of anti-slavery crusaders. In fact, the Underground Railroad was a personal form of nullification on a mass scale.

Although Woods approaches his subject from the Right, he tries to show those on the Left that they need not be

afraid of the word “nullification.” His first chapter recounts contemporary nullification efforts linked to causes that are congenial to most civil libertarians and many modern liberals: repeal of the Real ID Act, medicinal use of marijuana, state-level Firearms Freedom Acts, and the antiwar Bring Home the National Guard movement.

Jeffersonian and small-is-beautiful strains of liberalism notwithstanding, however, Woods concedes that today’s liberals—comprising what he calls “the imperial Left”—are largely hostile to decentralization of political power. Sad but true. Even the Green Party, which has decentralization as one of its key values and grassroots democracy as one of its pillars, often defaults to a knee-jerk defense of federal bureaucratic control in policy debates, thereby acting more as an auxiliary of the Democratic Party than a genuine rival.

Woods says “the most important question of all” for Americans is what the United States is supposed to be. He’s talking fundamentals, the nature of the Union: the compact theory of Jefferson and Madison vs. the nationalist theory of Hamilton and Marshall. We learn from these pages that the Constitution originally began with the words “We, the States...” rather than “We, the People...” Not wanting to sound presumptuous, and perhaps desiring to appeal to democrats fond of popular sovereignty, the Framers’ Committee on Style changed the wording before sending the document to the states for ratification. Nevertheless, at ratifying conventions the Federalists themselves reaffirmed the principle of states’ rights, as did Madison and even Hamilton in their writings and speeches. Even before adoption of the Tenth Amendment, the Constitution was “sold” as a true federal system, with most domestic powers reserved to the states.

The final chapter of *Nullification* brings the question into the age of Obama. The only false note in the book is played at the opening of this chapter. To his credit, Woods mentions the decentralized political structure of the

Middle Ages in Western Europe. He goes a bit too far, though, when he writes, “Princes risked losing population (and their tax base) if they engaged in excessive taxation or interference in their people’s economic lives. People could simply move to another, less oppressive jurisdiction, which was never too far away.” Uncharacteristically for Woods, this is oversimplified. A few pages later, he more than makes up for this small misstep by cleverly connecting criticism of nullification with a quote denouncing states’ rights—whose author is then revealed to be Adolf Hitler.

Woods rounds things out with some practical ideas and a down-to-earth assessment of where we are today. He suggests amending the Constitution, by a national convention called at the request of the states, if necessary; state creation of federal tax escrow accounts; and jury nullification on an individual citizen level. As a populist-leaning liber-

Bastards Out! (Spencer Gantt) targets incumbents regardless of party. *Bye Bye, Miss American Empire* (Bill Kauffman) endorses secession. All are good books by perceptive authors, and all deserve to be read. Yet Woods’s book, and his reform tool of choice, are probably our best bet.

Woods is most helpful because he is most realistic. Nullification is not just an ideal. It is a reality. We have been seeing it in our time since 1996, when California partially nullified the cannabis provision of the Controlled Substances Act of 1970. The idea has been embraced by Democrats and Republicans in other states for other reasons. It pits power against power, not relying solely on the inspiring but elusive notion that average Americans can fight Washington. It’s hard enough for a citizen to fight City Hall. But governors and state legislatures can ignore or oppose the president and Congress, if they so choose.

NULLIFICATION IS NOT JUST AN IDEAL. **IT IS A REALITY.** WE HAVE BEEN SEEING IT IN OUR TIME SINCE 1996, **WHEN CALIFORNIA PARTIALLY NULLIFIED THE CANNABIS PROVISION OF THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT OF 1970.**

tarian, he cites Murray Rothbard as exposing the Establishment’s divide-and-conquer strategy, asserting that the government is “robbing all classes, rich and poor, black and white, worker and businessman alike” and “ripping us all off.” We ought to “strive to see all of these groups united, hand in hand, in opposition to the plundering and privileged minority that constitutes the rulers of the state.”

During the past couple of years, we have seen the publication of important books arguing that our political system needs reform. *The Revolution* (Ron Paul) urges a return to the wisdom of the Founding Fathers. *Grand Illusion* (Theresa Amato) wants to break the partisan duopoly via third parties. *Only the Super-Rich Can Save Us!* (Ralph Nader) hopes for help from public-minded wealthy individuals. *Vote the*

Here’s another plus: disparate groups do not have to join together in one tenuous coalition. Nullification is a tactic that is ideology- and party-neutral. It has across-the-board potential. The people of Indiana, Massachusetts, California, and Alabama can all choose their own desirable paths for statecraft and commonweal. “Variety is the very spice of life,” Cowper wrote. The Anti-Federalists, and even some original friends of the Constitution such as Jefferson and Madison, agreed. We can add our assent today. Tom Woods shows the way. ■

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[*Orwell: A Life in Letters*, Peter Davison, ed., Harvill Secker, 542 pages]

The Unknown Orwell

By John Rodden
and John Rossi

PETER DAVISON, the dean of Orwell scholars, has scored another triumph. After having compiled and superbly edited the 21-volume *Complete Works of George Orwell* in the 1980s and 1990s, he subsequently published three more invaluable books that readers of Orwell treasure: two edited volumes, *The Lost Writings* and *The Diaries of George Orwell*, and the single best short study of Orwell's literary career, *George Orwell: A Literary Life*.

Now Davison has collected Orwell's letters, along with a few heretofore unpublished items by the author or by others about him. Davison has organized the material chronologically and along with his footnotes provides a judicious overview of Orwell and his times. The result is a compelling collection that effectively serves as the autobiography that Orwell vowed he would never write.

Apart from everything else, the reader of this collection will be struck by the sheer volume of prose that Orwell penned. Throughout his 20s, he taught himself to write in a painful process during which he destroyed most of his work. Truly driven, there wasn't a time after—or possibly even before—his 1927 resignation from the Imperial Police in Burma when he wasn't writing something: a novel, essays, short stories, reviews, reportage. Reading through his letters, you will note not only the quantity but the impressive variety of what he wrote. Eric Blair, the man who became the writer "George Orwell," was a damn hard worker. For example, as Davison observes, during the two months that

he was writing *The Road to Wigan Pier*, he also published 12 reviews of 32 books. During the two years (1943-45) when he served as a literary editor at the left-wing weekly *Tribune* and composed *Animal Farm*, Orwell published more than 100 essays, short articles, book reviews, and pieces of occasional journalism—a remarkable output that had become typical for him.

Davison highlights an aspect of Orwell's work that is often overlooked: his humor, or in Orwell's phrase, quoting Mr. Micawber, "the hollow mask of mirth." Scattered throughout the letters are examples of Orwell's dry, wry wit. Dismissing the idea of an intelligent left-wing comic book for children because leftist ideologues are hopelessly earnest, Orwell noted that "Boys of the OGPU, or The Young Liquidators" would not do. Probably "nobody would read them," he said, and "it would be the worse if they did."

Among the discoveries in this volume is Jacintha Buddicom's 1972 letter to a cousin about her "lifetime of regrets at turning away" Eric Blair's marriage proposal and her conviction that "Julia in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is really Jacintha." There are also several letters by Orwell's first wife, Eileen, that reveal a side of her—and him—not fully recognized. Thanks to Davison's inclusion of Eileen's letters to her

remarked to a friend before she married him that his family "all adore Eric and consider him quite impossible to live with."

Different as Eileen and Eric were, they got along well. Her letters to him in the weeks before she died in 1945 reveal the depth of her affection for him. They should prompt readers who are doubtful about the success of the marriage to reconsider their views.

Orwell's letters disclose another very human side of him—his deep love for his adopted son, Richard. Although some of his friends were skeptical about whether Orwell and Eileen would be good parents, they proved surprisingly responsible. Orwell's letters after Eileen's death show how much he enjoyed fatherhood. He wrote constantly about Richard's doings: his weight, what he was eating, his slowness to talk, his talent with things mechanical.

Orwell's joy about fatherhood appears in his references not only to his son but also to the children of friends. Sometimes his advice has Orwell's characteristic quirkiness. When Rayner Heppenstall's son was born, Orwell told him to make sure to give him a good name. "People always grow up like their names. It took me nearly thirty years to work off the effects of being called Eric."

THROUGHOUT HIS 20s, **HE TAUGHT HIMSELF TO WRITE** IN A PAINFUL PROCESS DURING WHICH **HE DESTROYED MOST OF HIS WORK**. TRULY DRIVEN, THERE WASN'T A TIME WHEN HE WASN'T WRITING SOMETHING.

friend Norah Myles, she emerges as a real person. Although these letters appeared earlier in *The Lost Writings*, they fit comfortably within Davison's chronological approach, fleshing out the biographical aspect of this volume.

Eileen's own sense of humor is on display in this collection. She writes bemusedly about Orwell and his family, whom she characterizes as "on the shivering verge of gentility." She

When Julian Symons and his wife had a baby, Orwell wrote in a congratulatory note: "They're awful fun in spite of the nuisance & as they develop one has one's own childhood over again." And then, showing he had thought seriously about child-rearing, Orwell added, "I suppose one thing one has to guard against is imposing one's own childhood on the child."

A theme running through Orwell's

letters from the time of his participation in the Spanish Civil War is his growing hatred for Stalinism and disgust toward English intellectuals who served as apologists for communism. He saw them as power-worshippers who invested their need for a faith in Stalin's Russia.

Orwell told Victor Gollancz, his first publisher, that he wanted to show the duplicity of the communists in Spain. He wanted to write about what he had seen there because "the stuff appearing in the English papers is largely the most appalling lies." When Gollancz and other left-wing editors, such as Kingsley Martin at the *New Statesman*, refused to publish *Homage to Catalonia*, their devotion to Stalin began a process of alienating Orwell from many English socialist intellectuals.

DOUBTFUL ABOUT THE POPULAR RECEPTION OF **NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR**, ORWELL TOLD WARBURG **NOT TO EXPECT A BIG SALE: "BUT I SUPPOSE ONE COULD BE SURE OF 10,000 ANYWAY."**

As World War II approached, Orwell told Heppenstall that he hoped not to become cynical, but he believed "the future is pretty grim." Russophilia was a major reason for this. When a petition was organized for the release of antifascist prisoners in Spain, Orwell was outraged because "all the leading English Socialists refused to sign."

The roots of *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are traceable to Orwell's months in Spain. By the early 1940s he believed something had to be done to destroy the myth that the Soviet Union represented a revolutionary force. His letters after 1943 repeat a growing determination to expose what he called "the frightful harm to the left-wing movement in Britain and elsewhere" resulting from the white-washing of communism's reactionary character. By the last year of World War II, he believed the time was right for a satirical attack on Stalinism. "People are fed up with this Russian

nonsense," he told publisher Fred Warburg, "and it's just a question of who is the first to say 'the Emperor has no clothes on'."

The success of *Animal Farm* freed Orwell from financial worries for the first time in his life. He could move to his island refuge on Jura in the Scottish Hebrides and begin work on the project that had percolated in his mind since the final years of the war: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Orwell labored on the novel throughout 1947 and 1948. In a typical remark, he told Warburg that he was "not absolutely dissatisfied" with it. Warm praise indeed from him. Orwell believed its execution would have even been better "if I had not written it under the influence of TB." Doubtful about the popular reception of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, he told Warburg not to expect a

big sale: "But I suppose one could be sure of 10,000 anyway." Not strong evidence for the frequently claimed status of the author of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a prophet: he was only off by 20-odd million copies.

Davison's annotations and notes are superb. Never obtrusive, they advance the story of Orwell's life without distracting from the letters themselves. *Orwell: A Life in Letters* should take its place beside the biographies by Sir Bernard Crick, Michael Shelden, Jeffrey Meyers, Gordon Bowker, and D.J. Taylor as an indispensable resource for understanding George Orwell and his times. ■

John Rodden is the author of Every Intellectual's Big Brother: George Orwell's Literary Siblings. He has taught at the University of Texas, Austin and the University of Virginia. John Rossi is professor emeritus of history at La Salle University.

[*Jesus Wars: How Four Patriarchs, Three Queens, and Two Emperors Decided What Christians Would Believe for the Next 1,500 Years*, Philip Jenkins, HarperOne, 328 pages]

God and Man at Chalcedon

By Bruce Chilton

CONTROVERSY OVER JESUS has rippled in academic debates since 1979, the year that saw the beginning of what has been called "The Third Quest of the Historical Jesus." Each quest has produced considerable discussion—and often fierce opposition from believers. But the underlying concerns that make scholarship on Jesus contentious have not been adequately understood. Philip Jenkins's book helps to resolve some of the misunderstandings that have plagued both academic and public debate.

Typically, scholars and commentators treat the issue of Jesus as if it were an entirely historical question. Doing so ignores the basic orientation of Christianity in its classic forms from the Nicene Creed onward, an approach that treats which Jesus not as a historical figure but as divine reality. Jenkins deals with the conflict over the basic issue of Jesus' nature: was he God or was he man?

The Nicene Creed set the stage for this debate but did not settle it or even pose the crucial questions directly. The Emperor Constantine convened a council of the most important bishops of the Church—predominantly from the prosperous east of the Roman Empire—who met at Nicea in Asia Minor in 325. That council addressed the relationship between Jesus and God. Should Jesus be regarded as fully equal in divinity to his Father, the creator of the universe, or should he be seen as subordinate to the Father?

That fierce dispute combined in one argument two difficult areas of con-

tention. First, to think of Jesus as being equal to the Father obviously raised doubts about the monotheistic belief in one God. But second, according to Christian doctrine unless God has in some way actually taken on human flesh, humanity would have little hope of attaining eternal life with God. This great dispute about Christology was framed in the philosophical language of the time, but it concerned central issues of Christian faith and life.

The bishops at Nicea adopted the principle that Father and Son are equal in their divinity. This orthodoxy paved the way for the doctrine of the Trinity to emerge, according to which Father, Son, and Spirit are all united in their commonly divine being, although each has a distinctive character. And each of them is eternal, all one God. Orthodox Christianity even before Nicea had clearly understood that the Son is fully eternal, a primordial reality, God's *logos* ("word") that made the heavens and the earth and became flesh in Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:1-18).

Jenkins deals with the inevitable question that emerged from Nicea and divided Christianity: if Father and Son are of one being, then what was the nature of Jesus? Was the person who walked the earth in Roman Palestine

God or man?

The usual answer comes in the form of reference to a later council of the Church, at Chalcedon in 451. There the attending bishops, following the lead of Leo I, the bishop of Rome, set out the doctrine of two natures. Jesus was both fully human and fully divine. Nothing about his humanity detracted from his divinity, and nothing from his divinity was removed when he became man.

Although that may seem a straightforward compromise between those who saw Jesus as simply divine and those who conceived of him as the vessel of flesh in which divinity appeared, Jenkins shows convincingly that the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures came out of profound controversy and never brought real peace to the Church. His study brilliantly illustrates the principle that theology and history need one another in order for either to be understood.

Throughout Jenkins's account, passionate, engaged personalities—with ambitions and agendas and fierce local loyalties of their own—engage in questions of eternal truth. By the end of the book, we have seen them use critical argument, *ad hominem* rhetoric, political positioning, bribery, extortion, arson, assassination, and mob violence

in order to insist upon their view of Christ's nature or natures.

Decades prior to Chalcedon, discussion had been dominated not by the teaching that Christ had two natures but by the contention that he only truly had one, a view called Monophysite. Jenkins helpfully points out that, contrary to the two-natures teaching of orthodoxy, a Monophysite orientation is more natural to any form of Christianity that sees itself as part of an epochal shift away from the ordinary constraints of flesh and toward a new, transformed humanity. After all, if Christ is indeed of one being with God, his divinity must be the most important fact about his nature, the reality that means God became man and that by following Jesus believers may be sanctified to become "participants of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). In a sense, once one uses the term "nature" for Jesus' divine identity, it is likely to overwhelm any assessment of his humanity.

To say that the Son is of one "being" with the Father, as at Nicea, addresses Jesus' standing as divine, and expresses that standing in terms of the eternal, unconditioned being that is uniquely God's. "Nature," however, refers to Jesus' existence in this world and focuses attention on how the Son manifested his divinity.

The Church in Antioch, perennially at odds with the dominant theology developed at Alexandria, had long stressed Jesus' human nature. Jesus, after all, is described in Scripture as hearing he is God's Son when the Holy Spirit descended on him at his baptism (Mark 1:10-11), as being unsure that death was God's will for him (Mark 14:36), as weeping in grief (John 11:35), and thirsting at the time of his death (John 19:28). Two natures, human and divine, must therefore form a unity, according to the teaching of Antioch's Theodore of Mopsuestia.

One of Theodore's students, Nestorius, was named as bishop of the imperial city, Constantinople. Appointment of an Antiochene to Constantinople was fraught with risk. In its jealousy to be

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seen as the preeminent seat of theology, Alexandria had already demonstrated its capacity to depose a candidate from Antioch who had been named to Constantinople. Nestorius attempted to consolidate his position by attacking, removing, and imprisoning heretics. At first, he concentrated on Arians, followers of the teacher Arius who had been repudiated at Nicea for claiming that the

Cyril deployed all his powers to get his way.

So insistent was Cyril in his opposition to any division in Jesus' divine and human natures, he found himself saying not only that Mary was the *Theotokos*, but also that God had died on the cross. Logically, Cyril pressed a consistent claim, but there was little support within popular devotion for his strange new

important Christian center; led to the eventual formation of separate Nestorian, Monophysite, and Orthodox churches; provoked violence on a organized and spontaneous scale; and exacerbated the eastern empire's vulnerability to Arian Vandals as well as to non-Christian enemies such as Attila, the Sassanids of Persia, and Muslim conquerors.

Jenkins tells this story with judicious attention to detail and an engaging narrative style. From time to time, he makes useful and illuminating comparisons to contemporary debates, although he leaves implicit the relation between the "Jesus Wars" of his title and the debates about Jesus that have preoccupied recent decades. Perhaps it is useful to underline that, in addition to his argument that God had died on the cross, Cyril insisted that Jesus was a sacrifice from God to God in order to expiate sin. That teaching of atonement has long been enthroned as one of the "fundamentals" that gives modern Fundamentalism its name and involves commitment to the idea of Jesus' thoroughgoing divinity. Historical investigation by definition focuses on Jesus' human nature, seen apart from his divinity, and interferes with Monophysite faith. Jenkins's Jesus Wars are still our own, and his book marks an important recognition that debates about history may be theological at base. ■

JENKINS DEALS WITH THE INEVITABLE QUESTION THAT EMERGED FROM NICEA AND DIVIDED CHRISTIANITY: IF FATHER AND SON ARE OF ONE BEING, THEN WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF JESUS? WAS THE PERSON WHO WALKED THE EARTH IN ROMAN PALESTINE GOD OR MAN?

Son was not of the same eternity—and therefore not of the same, single being—as the Father. Persecuting Arians at this stage in Constantinople was as effective in establishing one's credentials as chasing Trotskyites out of the Politburo in the Soviet Union, and the ploy worked.

Unfortunately for Nestorius, he then overreached. Indeed, overreaching is a consistent, tragic theme in Jenkins's narrative. Not content with hunting Arians, Nestorius objected to local usage of a title attributed to Mary, the mother of Jesus, *Theotokos*. That term literally means "God-bearer," and it seemed to Nestorius nonsense to speak of a woman giving birth to God. She might be called the mother of Jesus, or Christ-bearer, but hardly God-bearer.

Nestorius faced a storm of protest, both locally and from across the Mediterranean. In Constantinople itself, the powerful sister of the emperor supported the veneration of Mary as *Theotokos* and had generally enhanced the role of women within the Church.

His trouble from her quarter, however, was modest compared to the opposition of the bishop of Alexandria, Cyril. Cyril was one of the most eloquent, powerful, and ruthless leaders of his time. His attack on Nestorius resulted in the condemnation of Nestorianism at the Council of Ephesus in 431, where

argument. In order to avoid recourse to a death-of-God theology—supported much later by Nietzsche for totally different reasons—Cyril came to a compromise statement with his counterpart in Antioch and acknowledged that two natures, divine and human, were at union in Christ.

But Cyril had set in motion a trenchant Monophysite logic that was not easily moderated. His handpicked successor, Dioscuros of Alexandria, overreached even more than Nestorius had. At another council in Ephesus in 449, vigilante squads of monks pressed their case, representations from Pope Leo back in Rome were silenced, and yet another bishop of Constantinople was deposed—and killed.

The Council of Chalcedon, under the protection of the new, vigorous Emperor Marcian—who was portrayed as a second Constantine in his propaganda—set out to undo the damage. Marcian's intervention was effective in promoting theological unity in the west of the empire, since Chalcedon substantially supported Pope Leo's position, which swayed discussion now that it could be properly heard. The west, however, was the least important part of the empire from the point of view of Constantinople. In the east, Chalcedon produced weakening divisions in every

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Land of the Fighting Bobs

The week that Wisconsin voters threw out Russ Feingold, the only step-grandson Fighting Bob La Follette had left in the U.S. Senate, I went to hear an Upper Mid-

westerner of similar pedigree, Bob Dylan of Hibbing, Minnesota.

I actually saw some heads without hoarfrost, a pleasing contrast to the last time I paid a column's wages to sit in a hockey arena and listen to music. When my brother and I attended a Bruce Springsteen concert a couple of years ago, we surveyed the crowd and figured we must have wandered into a tour stop by the Ray Conniff Singers.

Lord knows I loved Bruce back in the "Darkness on the Edge of Town"/"Neb-raska" days, after he had shed his early Dylan mimicry and set out to be the John Steinbeck of Freehold, New Jersey. My buddy Chuck and I would snake around town in his old jeep yowling, "If she wants to see me /You can tell her that I'm easily found..." Alas, while we were easily found, she sure didn't want to see us.

Politically, Bruce was nowhere near as interesting as the early punks or even that Mormon-Jewish hybrid Warren Zevon. (From Crystal Zevon's warts-aplenty 2007 portrait of her ex-husband, *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead*, comes this account of the Zevons' child-custody dispute: "Warren got on the phone; he was obviously drunk. ... He said, 'I'm to the right of your father and Ronald Reagan and if you think I'm going to let my daughter be raised by some f---ing Communist hippie, you're sadly mistaken'." But really, who can resist a songwriter who begins a lyric, "I went home with the waitress /The way I always do /How was I to know /She was with the Russians, too?")

Dylan, on several other hands, has been a Goldwater admirer, born-again Christian, and proponent of agrarianism as the "authentic alternative lifestyle." He was formed in Minnesota before he ever saw Greenwich Village. In his memoir *Chronicles*, the singer, mindful of his roots in that frozen ground, writes of Charles Lindbergh, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Eddie Cochran, Sinclair Lewis, and Roger Maris as men he "felt akin to," freethinking sons of the North Country who "followed their own vision, didn't care what the pictures showed them."

Lindbergh's congressman father, whom the *New York Times* tagged the "Gopher Bolshevik," was a fierce critic of Wall Street, Woodrow Wilson, and the war machine. Charles Lindbergh Sr. was

empire. There were giants in the earth in those days.

When the Masters of War—"even Jesus would never forgive what you do"—requested the presence of American sons at the blood orgies of 1917, 1941, 1950, and 1964, it was the Upper Midwest, with its Non-Partisan Leagues and retro-Progressives and Sons of the Wild Jackass, that brayed, "No!" Where are their offspring? I don't mean to be impertinent or importunate, Dakotas and Minnesota and Wisconsin, but we look to you for La Follettes and Nyes and McGoverns and you give us Al Franken and Ron Johnson? Turn off the goddamn television, would you please, and turn on Wisconsin!

Feingold had his flaws but he was the only member of the Senate with the guts to vote against the Patriot Act. As Jesse Walker of *Reason* writes, he also "voted against TARP, was decent on the Second Amendment, and was one of the rare lib-

TURN OFF THE TELEVISION, WOULD YOU PLEASE, AND TURN ON WISCONSIN!

a progenitor of a vigorous Minnesota antiwar tradition that found expression in men such as Senators Henrik Shipstead and Eugene McCarthy before degenerating into the boring Cold War social democracy of Hubert Humphrey and Walter Mondale or the Republican polenta of Pawlenty.

Bob Dylan is very much in the Lindbergh-McCarthy tradition, as Norwegian academic Tor Egil Forland explained in a 1992 *Journal of American Studies* paper titled "Bringing It All Back Home or Another Side of Bob Dylan: Midwestern Isolationist." But then Dylan is 69, old enough to remember when the people of his place looked askance at

erals to reach out to the Tea Parties instead of demonizing them." He was neither red nor blue—each a scoundrel hue.

Senator Feingold quoted Dylan in his concession speech: "My heart is not weary /It's light and it's free /I have nothing but affection for those who have sailed with me." Dylan closed our concert with "Ballad of a Thin Man," rasping, "Something is happening here /But you don't know what it is /Do you, Mr. Jones?"

I'm no more perceptive than Mr. Jones, but one thing is all too clear: the Upper Midwest, historic home of the American peace movement, has come down with an awfully bad case of laryngitis. And it's gettin' dark—too dark to see. ■

Concerned persons suggest that unless there is an *awakening*, government in America's republic will continue being transformed into the progressive-government ideology. But what *awakening* could be powerful enough to halt that juggernaut of a progressive government's desire to control what its citizens can and cannot do?



Richard W. Wetherill
1906-1989

The writer would like you to consider that the above *awakening* to the existence of a *natural law of right behavior has that power*. The law is known as *nature's law of absolute right*.

For nearly two decades, this behavioral law has often been carefully explained in one-page advertisements in several national magazines and newspapers and on radio broadcasts. There is also a Website where people worldwide can learn how to *get out of trouble, stay out of trouble, and start a new life*.

This natural law exerts the power of life and death for every person alive today as is evidenced by the untold numbers of those people who had previously populated this planet.

"How?" you ask. *Creation's law of absolute right states: Right action gets right results; wrong action gets wrong results. The law defines right action as thoughts and behavior that are rational and honest, thereby filling the need of each situation.*

People's motivation consisting of man-made laws, judgments, beliefs, likes and dislikes, wants and don't wants does not conform to *creation's law of absolute right*, and when wrong results occur, people have not known to look to themselves.

Laws of nature never play favorites. People obey natural laws or they suffer the consequences. *That* is the awakening information for this generation. And when people ignore *nature's behavioral law*, eventually their wrong action causes an eternal sleep from which there has been no awakening.

Whoever or whatever is the creator revealed this behavioral law to the mind of Richard W. Wetherill in 1929 in answer to his fervent appeal for an understanding of humanity's plight. And although Wetherill took no credit for identifying this law, his efforts to inform people of the flaw in their approach to life met

with a wall of resistance and opposition until he published his book, *Tower of Babel*, on January 2, 1952. Then small study groups were formed near several large cities in America. Later, all the members who were able to relocate came together under Wetherill's direction in southeastern Pennsylvania.

So much for a brief history of the group that now brings you the good news of the *law of absolute right*, and to the *awakening* that it brings to a world population in deep trouble and chaos.

A few centuries ago the Founding Fathers of America did their best to establish a country ruled in a God-fearing way by representatives of the people. Newcomers from other countries who were willing to be governed by its Constitution and Bill of Rights were welcomed. Over the years, people came in droves. Now, the divergence of political thinking is causing much turmoil and confusion for the populace.

There is only one solution: people must obey creation's law of absolute right to experience a trouble-free life that is both fair and well worth living.

Visit our colorful Website www.alphapub.com where essays and books describe the changes called for by nature's law of absolute right. The material can be read, downloaded, and/or printed FREE.

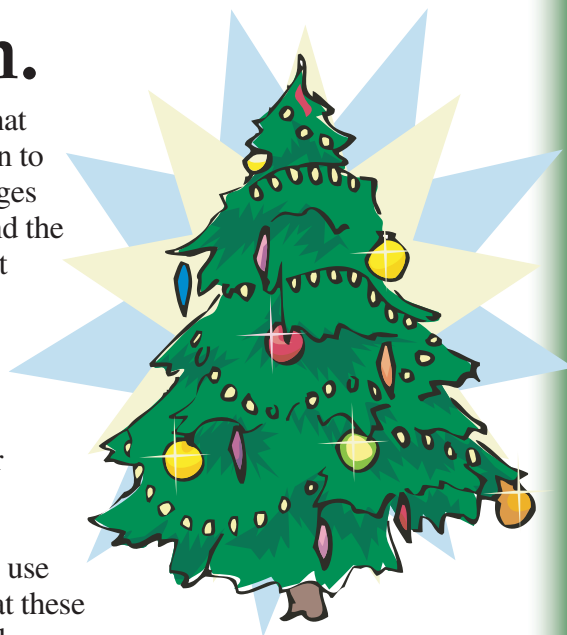
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This public-service message is from a self-financed, nonprofit group of former students of Mr. Wetherill.

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